Smithsonian

March 1988

Mysterious monsters stalk
the medieval paintings
of Hieronymus Bosch (p. 40)

300 CS

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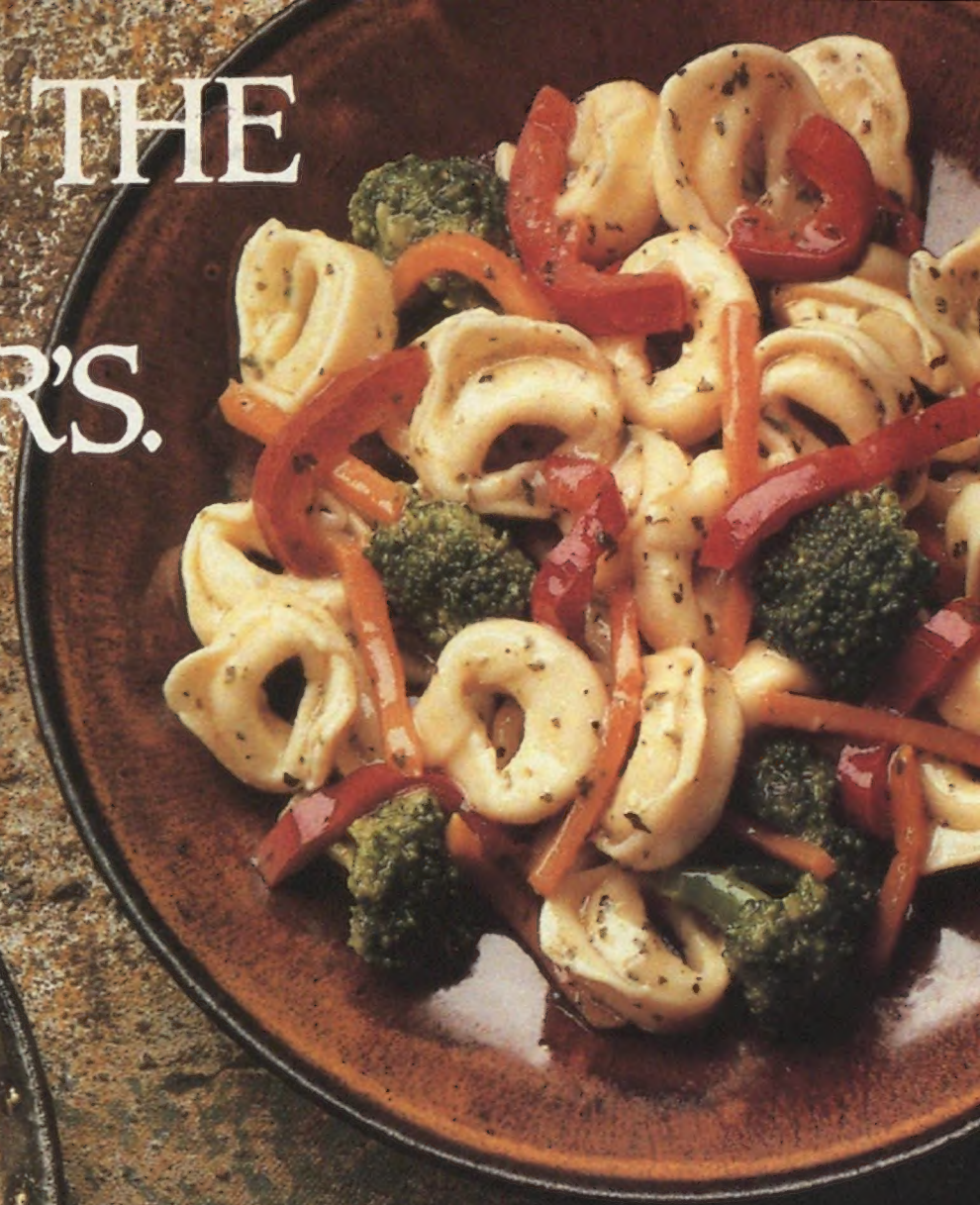

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March 1988

Smithsonian

Volume 18, Number 12

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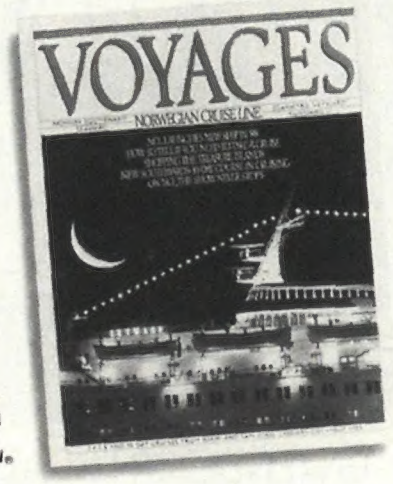

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Secretary Adams' comments

Smithsonian horizons

An exhibit at Air and Space introduces an important new tool for measuring our interactions with the environment

Almost all of our incredible climb skyward has occurred within a single human lifetime. There has been comparable, though less familiar, progress in turning our attention back toward the Earth from successively higher and more remote viewing platforms. An up-to-date exhibit at the National Air and Space Museum introduces the methods and instruments employed in "remote sensing," and illustrates its findings. Assimilating the implications of this new science should be a goal not only for the Smithsonian but for our whole society.

Early images consisted of aerial photographs, the cameras at first unspecialized and hand-held but quickly achieving greater precision and sophistication. Aerial oblique and vertical photography is still the commercial and scientific workhorse. Most of the U.S. Geological Survey's contour mapping of this country is derived from stereoscopic photographic coverage. My own first acquaintance with aerial photographs took place in Iraq more than three decades ago, where they proved indispensable in tracing successive overlays of ancient canals on desert land surfaces. Later refinements in interpretation even led to the detection of mere footpaths connecting the pueblos in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, abandoned since early in this millennium.

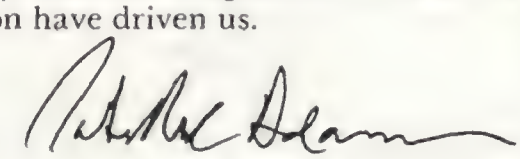
Accompanying our leap into space were advances in digital recording and the use of radar. The former permitted data to be transmitted from satellites, rather than stored on film and returned to Earth. Using digitally recorded images of reflected light from the Earth's surface, the Air and Space Museum's Patricia Jacobberger is tracing geomorphic processes that have repeatedly accompanied episodes of prolonged drought and famine in the African Sahel. Radar wavelengths, longer than the visible spectrum, can measure ground moisture, discriminate types of plant cover, or detect soil components and ore deposits.

Forest vegetation, too, need not be a barrier to radar, which has expanded our understanding of traditional Maya culture and ecology by mapping canals that were abandoned over a thousand years ago, under the jungle canopy of Mexico and Belize. As coverage of the Sahara has shown, it can even penetrate several meters through desert sands to disclose buried, otherwise-undetectable Pleistocene river systems. Typically, studies like these link orbital imagery with intensive fieldwork. This is aimed at establishing "ground truth" for individual image elements, or pixels, so as to assure accurate interpretation of overall patterns.

It should hardly be a surprise that the demands of military intelligence have been responsible for much of this advance. For those of us engaged in basic research, such a stimulus produces paradoxical and frustrating results. We hear indirectly of the almost miraculous capabilities of military satellites, the best of them being able to distinguish license-plate numbers or newspaper logos. But precise accomplishments are among the most closely guarded of secrets. In areas of tension like the Middle East, matters are even worse. Any recourse to satellite imagery at all—a vital resource in my own business of archaeology—tends to be regarded as spying.

A crucial advantage of satellite coverage is that it is systematic. The whole of the Earth's surface is scanned at regular intervals, so that dynamic processes can be followed across lengthening spans of time: tectonic displacement, flood cycles, agricultural harvests, urban growth, desertification, seasonal oscillations of polar ice, and tropical rain forest destruction. But the sheer volume of data accumulates with frightening rapidity, posing daunting problems involving the storage and retrieval of tens of billions of images. Yet the temptation to cut off an initial year for each new one added should be firmly resisted. Our growing capacity to understand processes of change, not only systematically and on a worldwide scale but through a lengthening time series, is an analytical tool of inestimable importance for measuring and planning human interactions with the environment.

The importance of remote sensing is that it provides a breathtakingly comprehensive vision of our whole endangered planet. National boundaries disappear, revealing common areas of destruction or risk, or with potential for improvement. Consequences of the individual changes that the Smithsonian helps to monitor are almost endless; ozone hole, greenhouse effect, eutrophication, acid rain, soil erosion and salinization only head the list. Remote sensing highlights their overlapping distributions and disturbing feedbacks. It highlights, too, the ineradicable complexity, uncertainty and interdependence into which so many heedless, fragmented courses of action have driven us.



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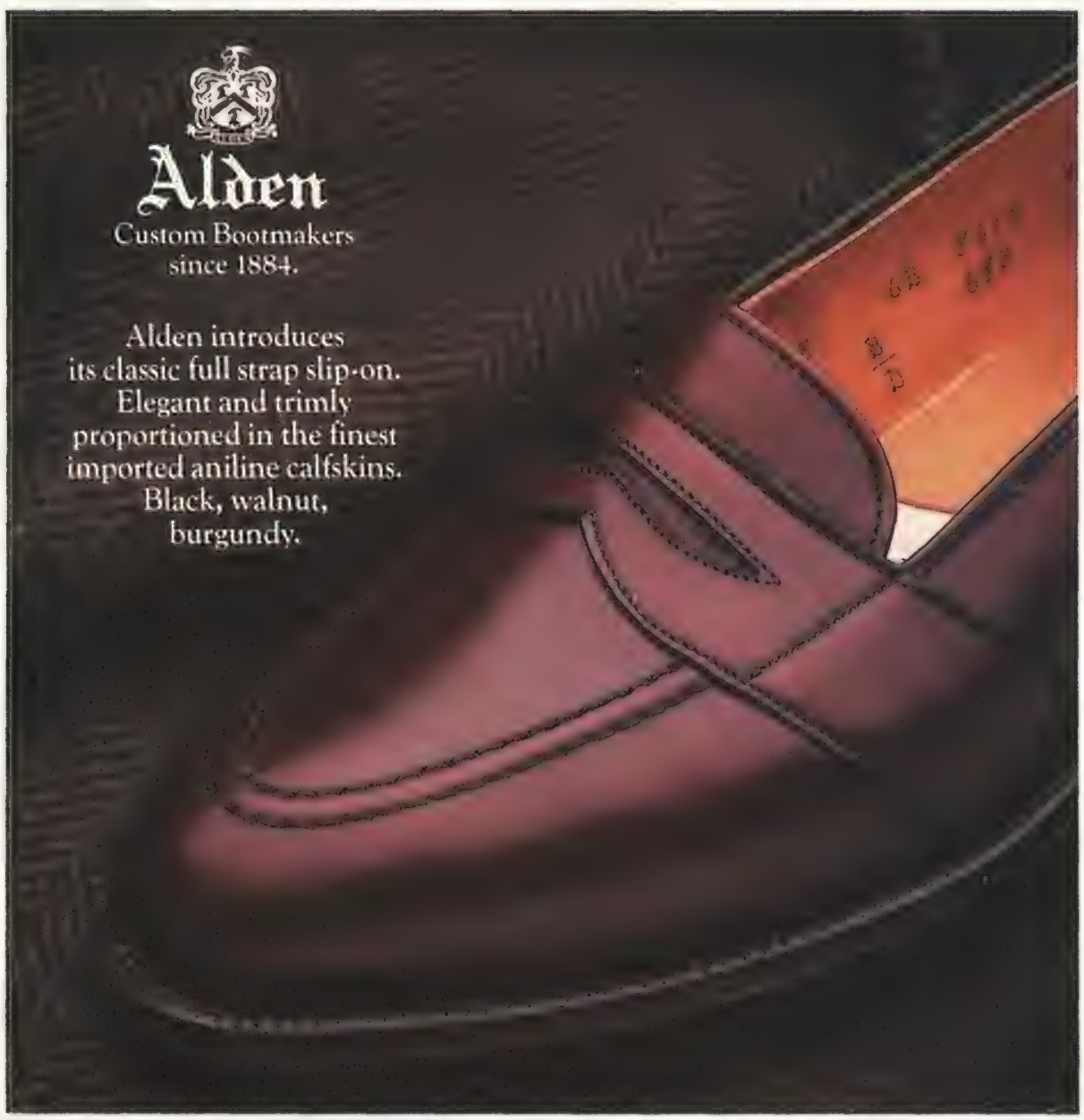
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Letters to the Editor

British East India Company

Dear Sir: Reading your January article, I recalled my great-grandfather, from Nottingham, England, who joined an artillery company of the East India Company in 1819 and shipped out to India.

On completion of his service in 1854 he settled in Cawnpore with his wife and five children, where the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny found them in 1857. He was among the European men who were separated from their families and set adrift on the Ganges by the local potentate, Nana Sahib. The rafts were set afire and then, from the riverbank, the men were shot down. Further treachery followed when the hundreds of women and children in Cawnpore were massacred and the bodies dumped into the infamous well. My great-grandmother and four of her children were among the victims.

The fifth child, my grandfather, an 11-year-old boy, was a boarder at La Martiniere College in Lucknow. During the siege of Lucknow he carried food and ammunition to the embattled troops, including many loyal sepoys. Although he escaped the mutiny, his name appears as one of the seven Probetts listed on the memorial erected over the well, which, as a boy in India, I visited.

His son, my father, also survived a siege in the Indian army—at Kut-al-Imara, in a bend of the Tigris, when the Turks took the town in World War I.

Charles J. Probett
Greer, South Carolina

Dear Sir: According to Pico Iyer's account of the Battle of Plassey in 1757, Robert Clive and the East India Company's 2,800 troops routed Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula's 50,000 troops, "defying the

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odds." He implies thereby that the company won by bravery or skill.

In fact, Clive made a deal with the nawab's chief general, Mir Jafar: if he would keep his troops out of the battle, Clive would support him in becoming nawab. Following their commander's orders, the nawab's soldiers withdrew after a brief skirmish. By the time Siraj-ud-Daula discovered the treachery, it was too late to recoup.

This and other events challenge the basic premise of the article—that India was Britain's "accidental" empire. At most every turn, the British were clearly shrewd and intentional in extending their power over the subcontinent.

Sunderlal D. Shah
Princeton, New Jersey

Australia

Dear Sir: The "father of Australia" was American-born, one James Mario Magraw (1745-1806) who, for unknown reasons, changed his surname to Matra. He sailed with Captain Cook as a midshipman on the *Endeavour*, and during the American Revolution served with the British diplomatic corps in Constantinople and Tenerife.

He was not permitted to return to his home in New York after the cessation of hostilities in 1783, so proposed a Loyalist and convict colony in New South Wales. The scheme enjoyed support among leading Loyalists, but the British government finally prohibited Loyalists from accompanying the convicts. Later, Matra served as British consul general in Tangier, where he died.

His other claim to fame, as related in my *A Handbook on the Founding of Australia, 1788*, just published by Thirteen Colonies Press, is that he introduced marijuana to the English-speaking world as an anesthetic in surgery—his father was a New York surgeon.

John Fitzhugh Millar
Williamsburg, Virginia

Dear Sir: In reference to that unaccountable Australianism for the English people, "Pommies," perhaps I have a clue. While stationed in Iwakuni, Japan, during the Korean War, I was told by Aussie friends there that it referred to a tendency of those fair-skinned Brits' cheeks to get as red as pomegranates if they stayed in the sun too long.

Paul J. LaVergne (USN, ret.)
Cantonment, Florida

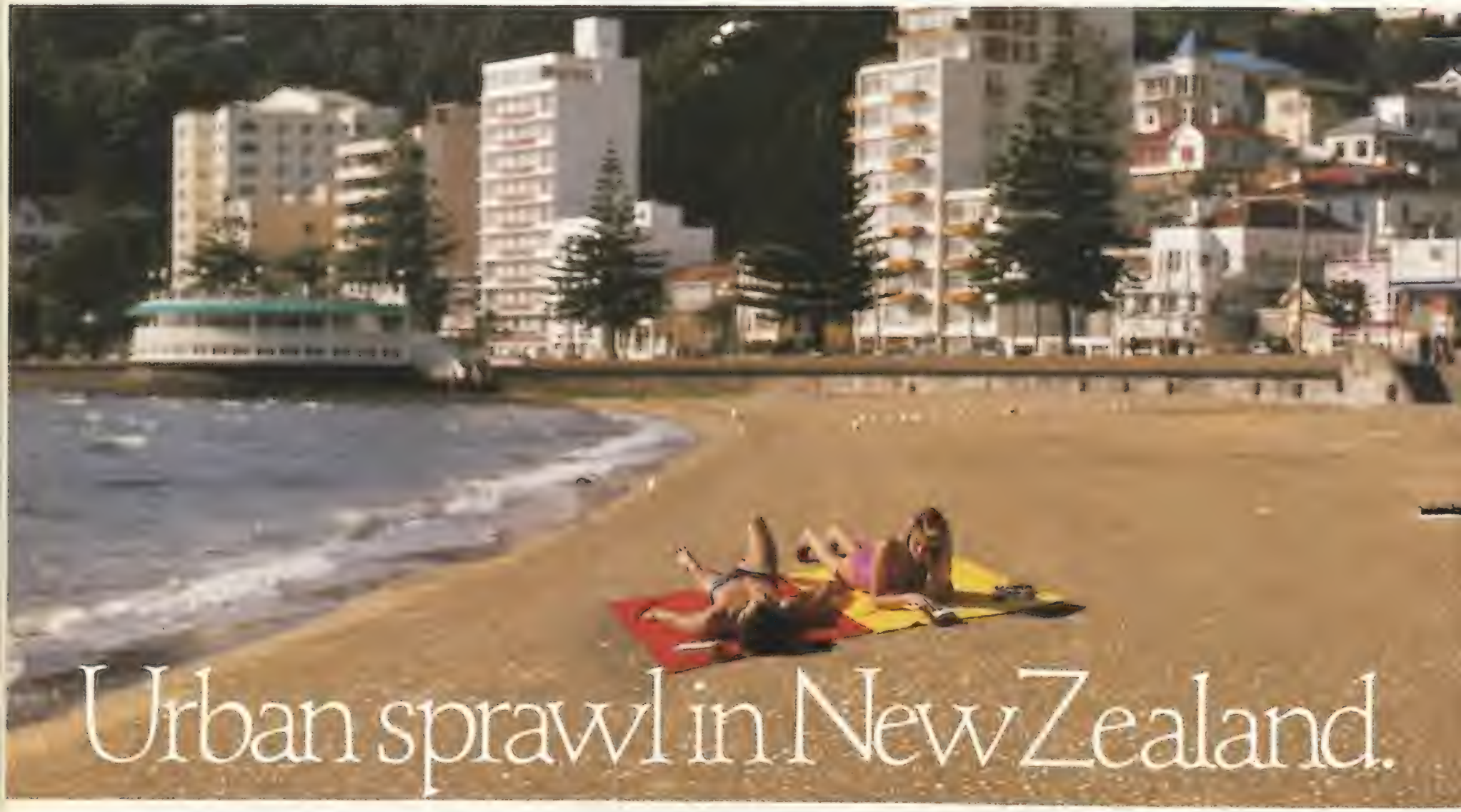
Dear Sir: I had heard the term was derived from the Australian reference to the Englishman as a "Pome," or "prisoner of Mother England."

Chuck Hansen
Tinton Falls, New Jersey

There is much speculation on the origin of the term. Another version is that the original convict settlers were known as "prisoners of Her Majesty," which was shortened to the acronym "Pohmies" and eventually spelled "Pommies." Ed.

Dear Sir: An Aussie student in the United States, I appreciated the tribute to my country but found questionable Mr. Park's interpretation of the origins of our national characteristics.

He shows a fascination with the exotic and colorful convict ancestry of Oz, a trait shared today by many yuppie Australians in search of a lift in their otherwise very urban and very boring lives. Those who cannot find proof of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For men, it defined the Lands' End role as the source of the basic swim trunk, offered in a few sound styles, made of quality fabrics, in popular colors, and priced to reflect attractive value. Our catalogs bear witness to how well we've succeeded. (One trunk sells for just $12, believe it or not!)

For women, we were slightly more adventurous. But we wisely (we think) concluded that women don't come to us for swimwear that will put them on the cover of that national sports magazine. No. They want something slightly less incendiary, that attracts but also fits well and wears well. Something they'd be comfortable including in a typical two or three swimsuit wardrobe.

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convict ancestry are inventing it in an attempt to glamorize themselves. It seems Park has not met that ilk, but did interview and know folks who expressed ignorance of their forebears.

Considering the great numbers who flocked to Australia during the gold rush, many of whom stayed (plus subsequent 19th- and early 20th-century immigrants), the majority of Australians would not have had convict forebears, so would not be evading the issue, merely stating a fact. And of those who did, their ancestors often had very good reasons for roots of crime, fostered by extreme poverty. In starting over with a new life, surely they deserve our respect. Indeed, the United States was a last stand for British felons before the War of Independence forced Britain to seek an alternative venue—a fact that is neither mentioned nor glorified as a shaper of American character.
Mary E. Henry
Charlottesville, Virginia

Dear Sir: Mention of the convict settlers of Australia brought to mind a conversation with a friend from New Zealand. We were living in the Philippines and one day, discussing genealogy, she told me the general public in Australia was no longer permitted to search for their ancestors in the hand-written record books. It seems if a convict ancestor were located, the swift application of a razor blade could eliminate him from the books forever. Then one could say, without fear of contradiction, "I haven't a clue" when asked about one's roots.
Mrs. Alice Montgomery
Watsonville, California

Dear Sir: Having just returned from some 13,000 kilometers around Australia —a wild camping experience for a 71-year-old great-granny—I was fortunate in witnessing the closing exercises of Scots College at the Opera House in Sydney. Their band was outfitted in kilts, and there is nothing that compares with hearing "Waltzing Matilda" played on bagpipes!
Jane Kathryn Conrad
Brighton, Colorado

The imperiled oyster

Dear Sir: At the turn of the century when I was about 7, my father, a New York lawyer, and a friend who also liked oysters did something practical. They had a weekend house in Osterville, on

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Cape Cod. Noticing that the small Cape oysters did very well there, they decided to try to improve the strain. They chose a good spot and put down a large number of scallop shells, which break easily, so the oysters that cling to them can be separated readily.

Then they sent a clean wooden tanker to Delaware Bay when the oysters were spawning, filled it with Delaware Bay water and oyster spawn, returned it to Cotuit Harbor and emptied water and spawn onto the spot where they had put the scallop shells.

That was the beginning of the famous large, fat, Cotuit oysters.

Margaret F. Apthorp
Concord, Massachusetts

Cotuit oysters are still produced by a similar method, but the Cotuit Oyster Company now gets its spawn from a hatchery in Long Island Sound. Ed.

Dear Sir: The verse that adorned your text helped assuage my sadness at the gloomy prognosis for the future of the oyster. And then I remembered another poem about this noble mollusk:

The oyster lives between two shells
His inner life he never tells
In philosophic calm he dwells
The oyster.
'Tis for no selfish shellfish girl
He makes a grain of sand a pearl
His heart is never set awhirl
The oyster.
When ice surrounds him on a plate
And lemon and Tabasco wait
He coolly contemplates his fate
The oyster.

James B. Murray
Earlysville, Virginia

Indoor stadiums

Dear Sir: You speak of Casey Stengel as "manager of the New York Yankees" in your reference to the Astrodome in Houston. Casey was the highly successful manager of the Yankees from 1949-60 but from 1962-65, the period when the dome was built, he was the less-successful but much-loved manager of the New York Mets.

Ellen Holt
Cliffside Park, New Jersey

Ms. Holt is correct. However, Stengel attended the opening game at the Astrodome on April 9, 1965, an exhibition match between the Astros and the Yankees. Mickey Mantle hit the first home run—and the only Yankee score; the Astros racked up two runs to win in 12 innings. Ed.

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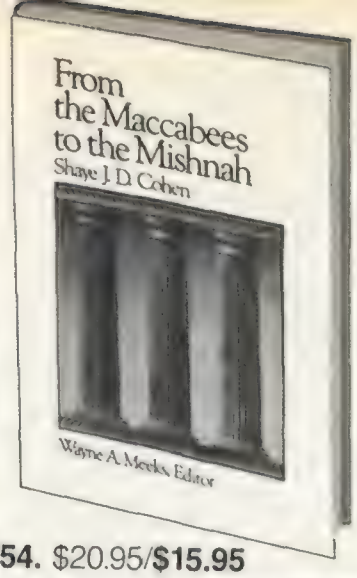

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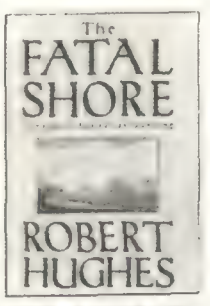

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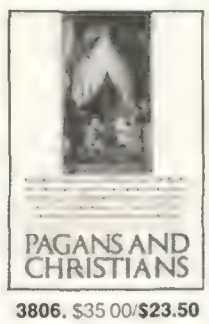

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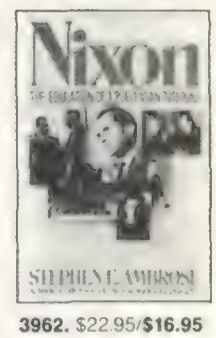

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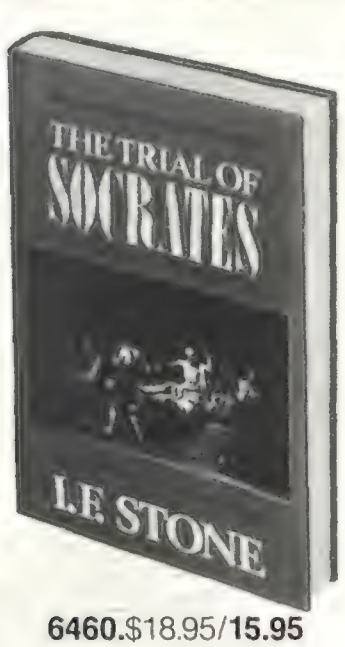

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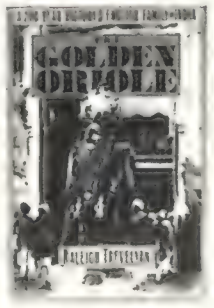

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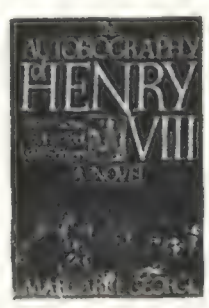

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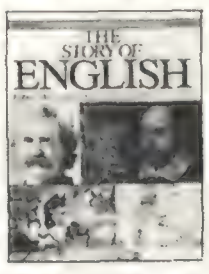

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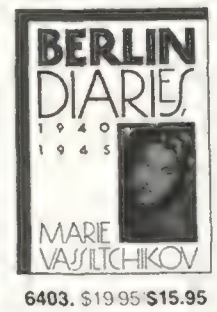

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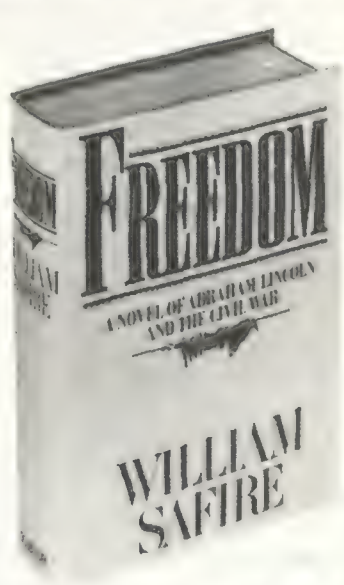

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Pineapples are very big in Hawaii On Oahu, an unusual tower pays tribute to the islands' most famous fruit. Rumor has it it's filled with pineapple ju

King Kalakaua slept here Only a few decades ago, royalty presided over the islands. Iolani Palace on Oahu still vibrates with the history and grandeur. Take the tour, and you'll hear names like Kamehameha, Kalanianaole, and Liliuokalani. You might even learn how to pronounce them.

Haven't I seen you somewhere before? Hard to believe, but there it is. Waimea Canyon on Kauai is 6 miles long, 3,000 feet deep, and at least 7 colors wide. It could pass for a cousin of the one in Arizona. Ours is cuter.

And now, for a 360° backflip Windsurfing, you'd expect. But not quite like this. Upside-down, backwards, inside-out, sideways. It's just not human. Here again, you may prefer to watch.

Hand me that lava wedge Greens against black. The startling sight of a perfectly groomed golf course on a backdrop of volcanic blacktop. The Big Island's Kohala Coast has one after another. Try not to hit the blue.

What...no cricket? Right, then. A few chukkers of polo on Oahu's north shore before lunch. Forgotten your horse? The rugby field's just a tumble away. Hawaii's into all sorts of sports, from boogie-boarding to baseball. Some of us just watch.

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Molokini Island. Population: 3 million fish A half-hour's sail from Maui, and you're snorkeling off one of our lesser-known isles. But don't tell that to the fish. They think it's a great place to meet people.

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NOAH

Stained Glass and Pewter Plate
by Kim Murray

Edition Limit: 9,500
Actual size: 10" diameter

The United States Historical Society invites you to own and display the *Noah* Stained Glass and Pewter Plate. *Noah* is truly a masterpiece to behold. It is a beautiful depiction of the account of the flood from the Book of Genesis, a classic portrayal of Noah and the Ark.

Kim Murray has created this work of art that glows with a luminosity rare in today's art world. Noah is the classic patriarch. His face shines with love and compassion, yet his dominance over the world of animals and ark is complete and unquestioned.

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Around the Mall and beyond

Look carefully at the pages of this issue and see if you can detect a difference in the type—a subtlety in its appearance. For with this March issue, SMITHSONIAN steps through a technological door that we have coyly knocked upon for some time. Every bit of our type is now set by the modern photographic process, rather than the old Linotype.

SMITHSONIAN is one of the last major magazines in the country to make the switchover. We were determined to preserve the crisp, readable quality of the Baskerville typeface that was part of the magazine's original design—and off-the-shelf reproductions were just not good enough. What you are reading now is a unique version, created under the direction of our publisher, Joe Bonsignore; it was made from the original Linotype matrixes, and transformed by a complex photographic and computer process.

I am impressed with all this progress, but Linotype machines have been part of my life for a long time and I shall miss them. To say good-bye, I drove over to Harlowe Typography where our magazine's type is set.

Harlowe's is outside of Washington on the way to Bladensburg, Maryland, where one of the War of 1812's more disastrous battles was fought. At the plant I was surprised to meet a former soldier of the Royal Scots Fusiliers. He is not a 174-year holdover from those redcoats, but the Linotype operator who, until this month's issue, set our pages.

Despite his name, Jim Kelly (p. 27) hails originally from southwestern Scotland. He's a pleasant 61-year-old who looks upon this magazine with the same interest, even affection, that an obstetrician might feel toward a teenager whom he had delivered and who turned out

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pretty well. "It's a guid magazine, with guid people doing it," he told me, in the lilting accent of the Lowlands (which I will no longer attempt to reproduce). "And I'm the man who sometimes caused you trouble by not being able to squeeze everything into a line."

In an unlit room behind Harlowe's front office, the now unused Linotype machines were arrayed. Flank to flank, massive and murky, bristling with purpose, they stand ready to spit out little chunks of knowledge.

Jim Kelly turned on a light and led me to an age-pitted oldster. Long usage had polished its steel and brass. Its 90 keys were barely legible. "This was doing your magazine," Jim said. "I was working on the February issue when word came that it was all over for it."

He snapped a switch and the engine came gradually to life, groaning and squealing with the effort. "It'll smooth out in a moment," Kelly said, defensively. "It's our oldest machine, you realize, built in the 1930s."

He sat down before it—as he has for 21 years—and as though reassured by his familiar presence, the sounds of protest died away into a quiet, purposeful hum. His fingers caressed the strange keyboard: capitals in white, lowercase and combinations of letters in black, punctuation marks and figures in blue. The machine clattered as characters slid down their brass channels and fell into place in the assembler.

Seeing Kelly stroke the keys, hearing those sounds, I found myself transported to the early youth of my own journalism. I remember editing on the "stone"—the heavy tabletop where the tray of slugs was set into a form. Reading the reverse type upside down, I'd notice a "widow"—a single, lonely word at the left end of a whole line, ending a paragraph—and ask the Linotype operator to cut something less vital two lines up. The machine would rattle and chunk briefly and he'd produce two slugs, still hot to the touch.

"Hot type," it's called. Just 102 years ago, the *New York Tribune* pioneered the use of this invention of Ottmar Mergenthaler, which produced whole lines of type, neatly formed, instead of single characters plucked from a font drawer and laboriously positioned and justified in a hand-held "stick."

Mergenthaler's wonderful machine keeps melted metal (loosely called "lead," but actually an alloy) in a reservoir at about 550 degrees F. It pours into a mold the exact length of the line you need. When you strike a key, the matrix of an individual character slides down to the mold, where hot lead fills it and forms the typeface. Typing at your keyboard, you produce line after line, each slug quickly hardening as it cools, and chunking into the tray. When you complete a page, your lines are locked into a chase—a page-shaped rectangle—from which proofs are "pulled" and a page matrix is made.

For a century, this was the quickest way to set type—the greatest step forward since printing was invented in the 15th century. But today's information revolution has left it for dead. Using phototypesetting ("cold type"), pages are prepared photographically instead of in type. An operator sitting at his desk makes copy changes with a tap or two on his computer. Not a drop of ink touches paper until the magazine goes to press.

Together, Jim Kelly and his Linotype set SMITHSONIAN's pages from the start.

The change moves Kelly into a new job as proofreader. "I've had plenty of practice," he says, "cleaning up the little odds and ends that sometimes get past the people in Washington." But he's reluctant to quit a career that's almost a half-century old. "I'd have liked to have finished 50 years on hot type and then retired."

His affair with Linotype goes back to his youth in a town on Scotland's River Cree, which marks the boundary between the counties of Wigtown and Kirkudbright. At age 16 he was apprenticed to a newspaper and introduced to Linotype. "Learn the keyboard," the boss told him. He thought he could never master those 90 keys, but for seven months he worked at it. "And one day the boss came in and said, 'It's time ye set a live line.' And that gave me a very different feeling than just practicing."

He worked with an ancient and temperamental machine. "A British Model 1," he recalls. "Sometimes it would keep on going when I'd stopped typing, turning out hollow slugs and pied lines. When I tried to fix it, it would spit hot lead at me and ruin my trousers."

Jim was too young for the first part of World War II and was kept on for a spell after he was called up because the paper couldn't get along without him. "I was the last one at work on the machine back then, and again now. There must be something about me." He went with the army to Germany and ended up working two years on a paper in Düsseldorf. Then he spent ten years in Bermuda, married an American girl, moved to St. Louis and came to Washington to work on magazines like *Science* and *Washingtonian.* Friends in the business lured him to Harlowe's 21 years ago and he's been SMITHSONIAN's operator since it was born.

And now the old job is over for him. He'll make a fine reader and there'll be no more holes in his pants from hot lead, but he admits that he'd love to keep a machine for himself and do a little fine work on it.

"Why don't you?" I asked.

"Well," he said, "I live in an apartment and I'd be in trouble if a bit of spilled lead went through three floors and ended up in the basement."

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Memory slighted a Gloucester sailor who lost his fingers in a winter gale, only to cross the Atlantic alone—twice

Memory, like imagination, can suffer from failure of nerve. Caught up in our everyday conflicts and setbacks, we forget that giants still walk the Earth. We do not imagine ourselves as heroes, and forget that other people are. Memory sometimes loses the scale of such people, not to mention the facts.

In a column about fish and fishermen last May, I wrote about a hero I had heard and read about as a child in Gloucester, Massachusetts. His name was Howard Blackburn, a fisherman in the days of sail. He was fishing from a dory at sea, lost his schooner in a storm and ended up rowing to land in the middle of winter in the North Atlantic.

Well, I was trusting to memories from 40 years ago. As several readers gently pointed out, I had every fact wrong, even though I was right about the central truth—that a man had done something superhuman. What I missed completely was the knowledge that my mental image of Blackburn rowing, his partner dead in the stern, his own frozen fingers now claws molded about the oars, was only the beginning of the saga.

Recently a friend found for me a copy of *Lone Voyager* by Joseph E. Garland, the revised edition of his life of Blackburn published by Nelson B. Robinson in Rockport, Massachusetts. All the information here is taken from that book.

Howard Blackburn was born near Port Medway, Nova Scotia, the son of a fisherman and the grandson of a man who once set out on the 80-mile sail to Halifax, was caught in a storm and fi-

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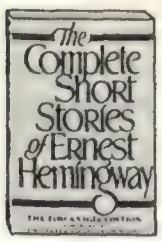

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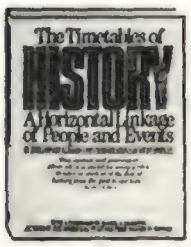

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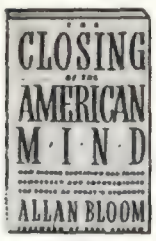

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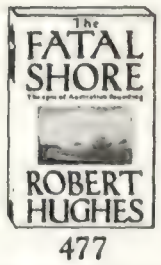

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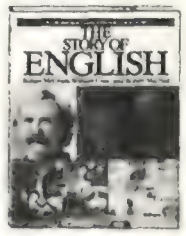

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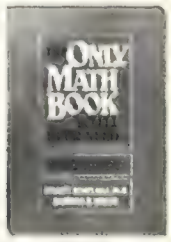

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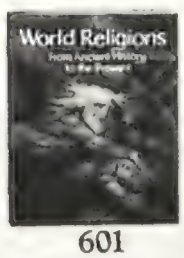

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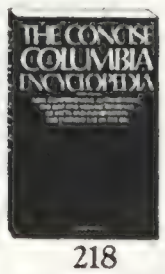

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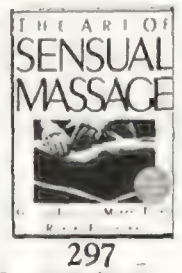

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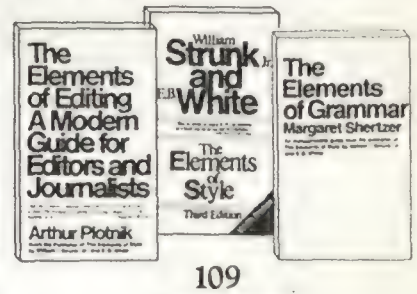
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nally made land in St. Martin, the West Indies, more than 2,000 miles away. Howard went to sea at 13; at 20 he arrived in Gloucester and signed on with the fishing fleet. In January 1883 he was aboard when the *Grace L. Fears*, an 81-foot halibut fisherman out of Gloucester, dropped anchor on Burgeo Bank, just south of Newfoundland. The fishermen paired off in dories—18-foot rowboats that could carry a ton of fish—to set thousands of feet of trawl line along the ocean bottom. Just two hours later, the captain ordered them to start pulling in: the weather looked threatening and they would have to settle for the fish they had caught so far.

Snow began to fall. Blackburn and his partner, Thomas Welch, pulled in their trawl, throwing the few fish they had caught into the bottom of the dory. Snow was falling harder; they started back for the schooner. A squall struck, the wind now blowing from the direction of the mother ship. They rowed for all they were worth, able to see nothing in the flying spray and snow. Then, afraid that they would row right by the schooner, they anchored. Darkness fell. The snow thinned and now they could see a torch hung in the rigging of the *Fears*, still directly upwind.

Again they rowed with all their strength, but the wind was too strong; they could make no headway. Once more they anchored, and now the pressure of the anchorline on the bow held it down, allowing the waves to crash over. Water poured into the boat.

They kicked in the head of a keg used as a buoy and bailed for their lives. Spray froze on the boat, making it heavy and ponderous. They threw all their gear over the side and all the fish, except a cod. At dawn there was no sign of the *Fears*. The dory was alone in a gale on the North Atlantic.

They were 60 miles or so from the Newfoundland coast. That morning they tried to row, but the seas were running too high. Blackburn fashioned a sea anchor out of the other keg buoy and tied the mooring line to it. His mittens made the work clumsy, so he threw them in the bottom of the boat. The open end of the keg dragged enough in the water to keep the bow pointed upwind. Even so, water was still coming in, and again the men bailed. The mittens went over the side unseen. Within an hour Welch mentioned to Blackburn that his fingers did not look right; they had turned gray. Blackburn realized his hands were freezing. He picked up his oars and slowly bent his fingers and thumbs around the handles. In 20 minutes they froze into claws. Then he put the oars down and continued bailing. They alternated bailing and knocking ice off the boat.

Night fell again. Welch was weakening, and could no longer help bail. He asked for water (they had none), mumbled what sounded like prayers. Two hours after dark, Welch was dead. For the rest of the night, Blackburn bailed and hammered ice. He would rest huddled in the bow, then start bailing again when a wave broke into the boat. Little by little the storm abated. When the sun rose on the third day, the sea was nearly calm. Blackburn pulled in the sea anchor, picked up the oars and began the row to Newfoundland. All day he rowed, frozen flesh crumbling off his fingers in a dry powder.

The wind came up again and blew

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hard through the third night. Blackburn put out the sea anchor and huddled in the bottom with his arms around a seat, rocking to keep warm. At dawn of the fourth day the wind died down; Blackburn hauled in the sea anchor and started to row. Late in the afternoon he could see a white stretch of coast. At dusk he found himself in a cross tide, where an unseen river was emptying into the sea. He struggled against the current and finally saw rock cliffs lining the river mouth. He fought his way into the narrows, pulling hard. Then he was through and into the river proper. In the last light he saw a decaying wharf with a hut behind it. He pulled the boat up on a flat rock next to the wharf, stood up on his frozen feet and stepped ashore.

The ordeal was not over. He thought to sleep inside the roofless, snow-filled hut, then realized it was so cold that he would not wake up. So he spent the night walking the floor and eating snow, his first water in four days. At dawn of the fifth day he walked back to the dory. Waves had pounded the boat against the rock, knocking the plug out of the drain hole and splintering two planks. Welch's body was under the water in the boat, the oars were floating free under the wharf.

First he retrieved the oars. Then he tried to lift Welch's body out of the dory. Pain stabbed his body and he dropped the corpse into the river: he had ruptured himself. He worked the bulging hernia back inside with his claws. He pulled on the boat, moving it a little farther up on the rock with each incoming wave until the drain hole was clear and some of the water ran out; he bailed the rest. Then he shoved the boat back into the water, climbed in, picked up the oars and headed back out to sea. Water pushed in through a long crack in the bottom, and he had to hold the dory tipped to one side to keep a broken plank on the other side out of the water. Every few minutes he had to stop to bail.

Outside the river he turned east. He rowed five or six miles to a cove, saw one house but no sign of life, then saw two schooners outside in the ocean and rowed back out of the cove to intercept them. The wind shifted and the larger vessels disappeared behind a cape. Now it was late in the day. The wind was picking up, snow was falling. He decided to return to the river and the hut.

He battled back through the currents, this time moving up the other shore. And now in the moonlight he saw what he had not been able to see from the west shore. Perhaps three-quarters of a mile upriver from the hut where he had spent the previous night was a cluster of cabins. For more than three hours he rowed against the river current. Late that night he finally arrived at the edge of the ice in front of the cabins. Some people saw him, came to the edge and caught hold of the boat. After five days, he was saved.

The Frank Lishman family of the Little River settlement took him into their dirt-floor cabin and spent the winter treating his frostbite; he lost all his fingers, his thumbs at the first joint, half of his toes and the heel of his right foot. They fed him from their meager store of flour, cornmeal and dried codfish. The main beverage was tea made from spruce branches.

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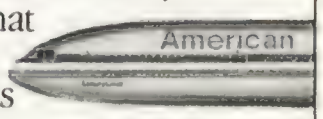

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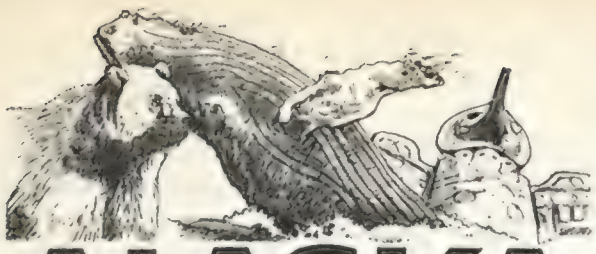

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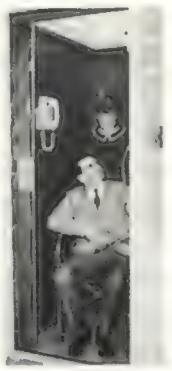
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Howard Blackburn prospered after his epic struggle at sea, then sailed again.

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Blackburn was a hero, but with no fingers on his hands he was unable to work as a fisherman. The company that owned the *Grace L. Fears* did pay him what would have been his full share for the voyage: $86. The *Cape Ann Advertiser* collected $500 for him. Blackburn opened a little store, selling food, tobacco and small supplies to fishermen. When Gloucester voted itself wet, the place became Blackburn's Saloon, a favorite of watermen up and down the coast. He made enough to pay back the money that had been collected for him, and began a lifelong habit of sending food, clothing and supplies to the Lishmans and other families in Little River—and to the doors of people in Gloucester who were down on their luck. And he married.

It was a nice, comfortable life for a handicapped man. I had misremembered that Gloucester had taken care of him. In no small way, it turns out, he had taken care of Gloucester. I had

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been sure that he had rowed all the way to Ireland; a superficial knowledge of prevailing winds and currents made it seem possible. In fact, he had rowed a straight-line distance of only 60 miles. But, I discovered in Garland's book, that was only the first of a series of adventures. In 1897 Blackburn organized an expedition to the Alaska goldfields and skippered the 110-foot schooner *Hattie I. Phillips* 12,500 miles around Cape Horn and up to San Francisco, only to have a falling out with expedition members and to return to Gloucester.

And then he did cross the Atlantic, alone in a small boat—*twice*. On June 18, 1899, Blackburn, with his fingerless hands, sailed the 30-foot sloop *Great Western* out of the harbor, bound for Gloucester, England. For the first eight days pain from his deformed right foot kept him so sick he could not eat. Then the pain subsided and he sailed on through a series of gales, covering the 2,900 miles in 62 days. Two years later he sailed the similarly sized *Great Republic* to Portugal in just 39 days.

The year 1903 found him alone in a dory again, just 20 years after the horror of Burgeo Bank, headed for France. This was a Swampscot sailing dory, not quite 17 feet long, which he christened *America*. But he ran into a series of gales, one of which may have rolled the boat completely over, and after a month of being thrown westward, he put in for good at Louisburg, Nova Scotia, and called it quits.

Writing that Blackburn had rowed to Ireland was public error; saying that as a young child I had been introduced to him was a private error just as egregious. Garland's book confirms what the letter writers point out: Blackburn had died four years before I was born. (The Secretary of the Navy marched in his funeral procession.) I must have been introduced to someone else in Gloucester, and somehow in the years that followed, years in which I lived in a room with a map of Gloucester that featured a drawing of Blackburn in his dory, my desire for a link to this extraordinary man welded a faulty connection in my memory circuits. Memory was faulty on miles and dates, but also on the magnitude of the man: it didn't go far enough. All these years I have had the facts wrong; the admiration was right on the money.

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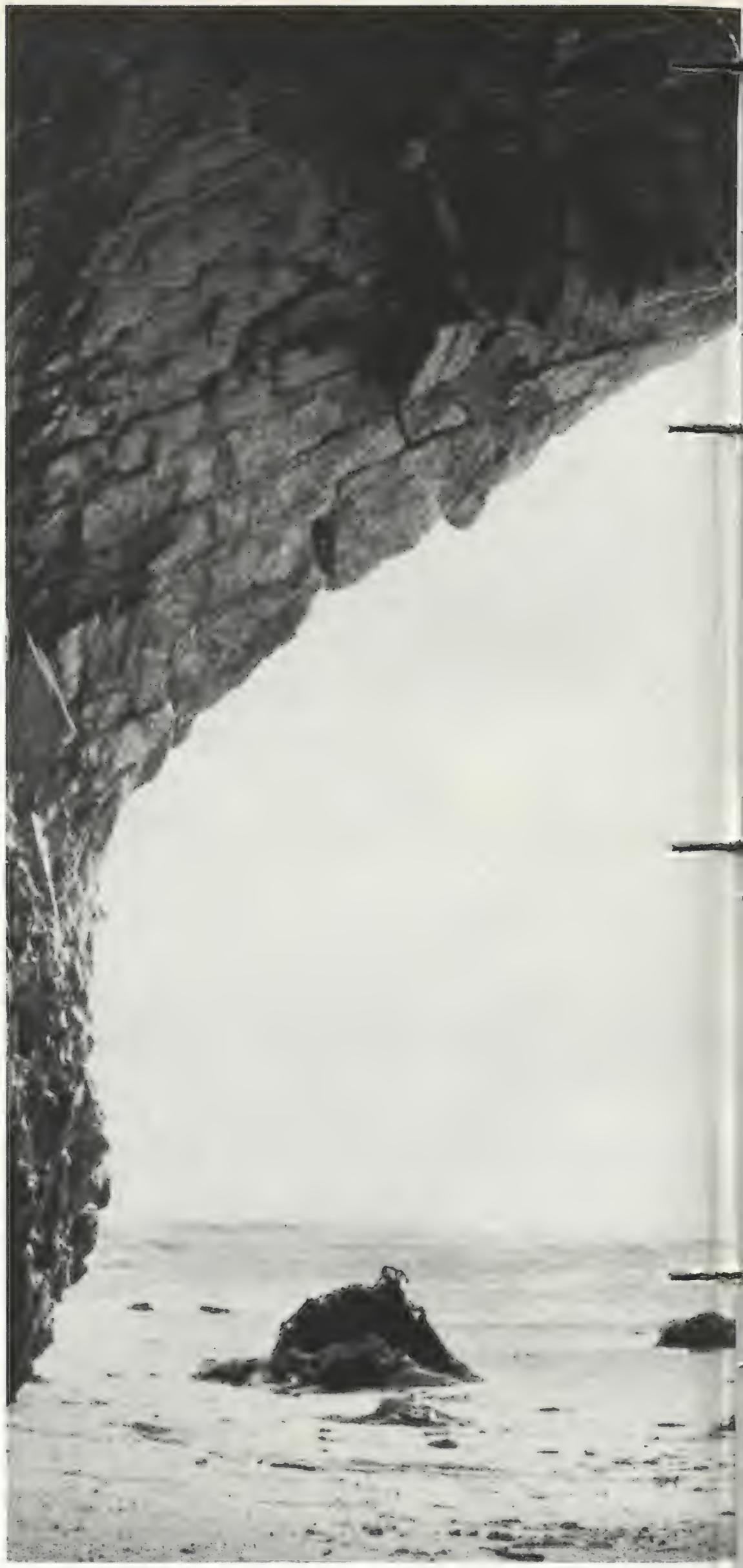

IF YOU LOOK HARD ENOUGH, YOU'LL BE

SURPRISED WHAT YOU MIGHT FIND.

Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon

By Stanley Meisler

The world of Bosch

With his bizarre and fearsome images, the enigmatic master of apocalypse still speaks to us across five centuries

A half-millennium ago when Europe was moving out of the Middle Ages, Hieronymus Bosch, a prosperous painter and landowner in the duchy of Brabant in what is now the Netherlands, was widely admired as one of the cleverest, most pious, most perceptive, most apocalyptic masters of his times. He then slipped into several hundred years of obscurity. The symbolism and message of his terrifying masterpieces seemed bizarre and unsavory and even heretical. But he has been rediscovered in the 20th century. American tourists, who have little Bosch at home, now crowd through the museums of Europe to be awed by his great triptychs or to track down his smaller masterpieces.

One afternoon in Madrid, during the troubled late 1970s when Spain was transforming itself from a dictatorship to a democracy, I entered the dark gallery of the Museo Nacional del Prado that displays Bosch's enormous triptych *Garden of Earthly Delights* (pp.47-49) and came upon a surprising assembly. The room was filled with 50 members of the gray-uniformed armed police—despised under the dictatorship of the late Generalísimo Franco as agents of oppression, and still looked upon with suspicion. A curator was lecturing to them about the fierce and wondrous work. Why were the police there? "They were probably

Backed by sword-brandishing fiend, horse-skull demon strums harp in a detail from *Saint Anthony Triptych.*

National Gallery, London

Many of the artist's works treated traditional Christian subjects; here is his *Christ Crowned with Thorns.*

learning new torture techniques," a friend remarked later. But I learned that the police, all young recruits, were taking part in a new educational program aimed at changing the mood and image of their organization. They were being shown one of Spain's strangest and most terrifying treasures.

I have sometimes wondered what the police—and the puzzled-looking tourists—make of Bosch's furious symbolism and dark visions. What does a master artist of the 15th century have to say to his large public in the 20th century?

There is little doubt about his popularity. Some of his monstrous images have become clichés, almost camp. Few paintings have had the kind of attention that has been lavished on the *Garden of Earthly Delights.* Together, the three panels of this triptych measure nearly 13 feet in width and a little more than 7 feet in height. Yet every inch of the enormous painting was reproduced in full size in John Rowlands' out-of-print book published in France, England and the United States in the late 1970s. Choreographer and director Martha Clarke startled and delighted New York audiences in 1984 with her Off-Broadway dance-theater work based on her interpretation of the painting. Joyce Carol Oates used the name of the triptych as a title for a novel in 1967. And earlier, in 1957, Henry Miller published a book entitled *Big Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymus Bosch.*

The Bosch cachet persists despite two nettlesome problems in getting to know and understand him. One, especially for an American, is the difficulty of getting to see him. Of the dozen or so paintings attributed to Bosch in American collections, only *Death of the Miser* (p. 55) in the National Gallery of Art in Washington can probably be counted as a work of first rank. There has never been a full exhibition of Bosch in the United States. The works of Bosch, in fact, have not been gathered together since his native city of 's-Hertogenbosch, which possesses no Bosch paintings of its own, celebrated his genius with a grand exhibition in 1967. The heart of his work is in the Prado in Madrid. Yet many critics believe that Bosch's greatest work is the *Saint Anthony Triptych* (pp. 44-46), which hangs in one of the less-visited museums of the world, the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon. There are masterpieces as well in the Louvre in Paris, the gallery of the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Vienna, the Museum Boymans-Van Beuningen in Rotterdam and other European museums. It's not easy to gather up Bosch in one swoop.

The second problem is that admirers cannot always find the keys to the mysteries of Bosch in the books of the specialists. His extraordinary images have often evoked flights of self-indulgent, poetic fancy that reveal more about the critics than about Bosch. Scholarship, moreover, is frequently confusing and contradictory, even on what seem to be elementary issues. Some scholars, for example, believe that *The Wayfarer* in Rotterdam (p. 51), a circular portrait of a tired, saddened, tattered man, is that of the Prodigal Son in the Bible. But other scholars insist it portrays a peddler, a thief, a drunkard, a wandering shepherd or a symbol of sloth. Bosch himself left no journal, no description of his goals, not even titles for his paintings. The known facts about his life are few.

Hieronymus Bosch was born around 1450 (the exact date was not recorded) in the duchy of Brabant, which was then the realm of the dukes of Burgundy. He lived during unsettled and anxious times. The old medieval order imposed by the Church was straining and cracking under the onslaught of the growth of cities, the new vigor of commerce and capitalism, the rise of national states, the demands for religious reform and

Correspondent Stanley Meisler reports from Paris for the Los Angeles Times. *He wrote on the heady days of the Vienna Secession,* SMITHSONIAN, *August 1986.*

the beginnings of science. Minds were growing curious, analytical, adventurous. During Bosch's lifetime, the Dutch humanist Erasmus wrote *Praise of Folly*, the Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus proposed that the sun was at the center of our solar system, and Christopher Columbus discovered the New World. In 1517, a year after Bosch died, Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg. Historians point to these events as the beginnings of the modern world.

The age was marked by violence and a new and pervasive pessimism. Kings and dukes murdered and warred for glory and vengeance. Marauding soldiers pillaged farmhouses and killed peasants. It was a time of pestilence, of misery for the poor, of cruel and incredible torture for criminals. The future seemed ominous with visions of demons, darkness and hell. People saw pious virtue overwhelmed by terrible sin. Preachers and poets cried out against the enormous greed around them. There was a sense, Dutch historian Johan Huizinga has written, of impending calamity and perpetual danger. "I, man of sadness," wrote Georges Chastellain, the 15th-century chronicler of the dukes of Burgundy, "born in an eclipse of darkness and thick fogs of lamentation." There is an honorable and portentous precedent for this point of view in the Bible's *Lamentations of Jeremiah*. The prophet, tormented beyond endurance, sets out a catalog of woe and agony, which he specifies in detail.

Bosch was among the pessimists. A member of a lay religious fraternity, he witnessed the corruption in the medieval Church and the sins of his townspeople, and cried out his warning of a wrathful retribution. The idea of an impending punishment was not new, of course, for it came directly out of the teachings of the Church. But Bosch issued his message with an imagery so fierce it could astound and chill his contemporaries and still fascinate his admirers 500 years later.

Bosch came from a region that was then the most urbanized and among the most industrial in all of Europe. The cities in what are now the Netherlands and Belgium dominated much of the commerce of Europe with their manufacture of textiles. Then as now, 's-Hertogenbosch was a small, thriving regional town, overshadowed by larger and richer towns of Brabant like Brussels and Antwerp. A market for the surrounding farmland, it also produced textiles and was known for its bell makers and organ builders.

In training as a painter, Bosch followed family tradition. His father, grandfather, three uncles and a brother were all painters. The family name was not Bosch but van Aken and Bosch was baptized Jerome van Aken. When he signed his works years later, however, Bosch Latinized his first name and for his surname substituted a shortened version of his hometown. This need to identify his hometown has led scholars to speculate that he must have spent some time away from 's-Hertogenbosch as a young man, perhaps to further his apprenticeship, possibly in Utrecht.

Around 1480, when Bosch was about 30 years old,

A field guide to Bosch's bizarre images

On the following gatefold pages are two of the artist's most famous triptychs, *Garden of Earthly Delights* and the *Saint Anthony Triptych*. He worked at a time when symbols constituted a basic visual language. Paintings displayed in public—mainly in churches—were proclamations for all to "read." Today the problem is to decipher what was, for the most part, clear to the medieval viewer. Although scholars don't always agree on interpretations, this sampler suggests possible meanings for some symbols found in the paintings.

pig: false priest; gluttony

fruit: carnal pleasure

rat: lies against Church; filth; sex

fish: false prophets; lewdness

closed book: futility of knowledge in dealing with human stupidity

flames: ergotism; fires of hell

flying monsters: hallucinations of ergotism sufferers; devil's envoys

keys: knowledge

lute and harp: instruments for praise of God and pursuit of love

breasts: fertility

mussel shell: infidelity

black birds: unbeliever; death or rotting flesh

knives: punishment of evil

rabbits: multiplication of the race

egg: sexual creation; key symbol of alchemy

ice skater: folly

funnel: deceit and intemperance; false alchemist or false doctor

strawberry: fleeting joys of life, love

owl: great learning

ears: gossip

spheres: alchemical apparatus

Visionary triptychs were Hieronymus Bosch's stock in trade

Below and opposite are outer panels of two of Bosch's major creations, the *Saint Anthony Triptych* and *Garden of Earthly Delights.* Below, Christ's suffering is depicted, a prelude to events within involving the saint. Outer panels of *Garden* show either Creation or world's end, but barely hint at vivid events inside: tranquil Garden of Eden, multiplication of the race in bizarre landscape, and panorama of hell.

Fold Out →

Saint Anthony Triptych

Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon

Garden of Earthly Delights

Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

← Fold Out

Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

Theme of *Cure of Folly* was current in the literature of the time. A stupefied and stricken patient is half-reclining in a chair while a surgeon draws, no doubt very painfully, a stone of folly from his head. Typical Bosch images—the funnel, a closed book—are interpreted in the field guide on page 43.

he married Aleyt Goyaerts van den Meervenne, who came from a wealthy family in 's-Hertogenbosch. Now a burgher of some means and a painter who attracted commissions, Bosch lived with his wife in a house on the market square and became a member of the Brotherhood of Our Lady, which was devoted to the veneration of the Virgin Mary. This wealthy organization adorned a gentle, wooden statue of the Virgin with sumptuous clothing, supported a chapel for it within the Cathedral of St. John, and commissioned musicians and artists to infuse the chapel with holy music and works of art. Most of the van Aken painters, including Bosch himself, worked on the chapel for token fees.

The most important recorded commission received by Bosch came from Philip the Handsome, Duke of Burgundy, in 1504. The duke ordered an altarpiece, 9 feet high and 11 feet wide, depicting scenes of the Last Judgment, heaven and hell. This painting has never been found. But the commission makes it clear that Bosch was regarded as a master painter of great respectability and deep religious faith.

As for Bosch's physical appearance, only copies of what may have been a self-portrait (p. 52), showing an elderly, austere man, survive. In this drawing, the eyes are large and intelligent, the lips tight and haughty. It was once believed that the sharp-nosed, intense hermit helping to support an unconscious Saint Anthony in the left panel of the *Saint Anthony Triptych* was a self-portrait as well.

In a remarkable analysis done some 40 years ago, the Dutch scholar Dirk Bax concluded that Bosch was a moralist with contempt for the lower classes. He had no sympathy for the poor and used his most bitter symbolism to satirize beggars, monks, nuns, soldiers, peasants, pilgrims, whores, gypsies, vagrants, minstrels and jesters. From time to time he lashed out at emperors, bishops and nobles as well, but rarely against burghers like himself and others of the wealthy middle class. He was most upset by the vices of lust, license, drunkenness, gluttony, folly and stupidity. He liked to dwell on erotic scenes and on cruel moments when pain was inflicted on others. Some art historians have since interpreted Bosch's paintings as displaying less pessimism and more understanding of the difficult plight of his fellow human beings.

His obsession with bizarre images has led to fanciful theories about Bosch. In 1947, Wilhelm Fraenger, a

Museum Boymans-Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

As with many of Bosch's works, the theme of *The Wayfarer* has been construed in many ways. One reading has it that the melancholy, tattered figure is a pilgrim traveling through a dangerous world. The tavern, the drunken man urinating and the embracing couple are all symbols of the real world's plentiful temptations.

German art historian, concluded that Bosch had been a member of the Brethren of the Free Spirits, also known as the Adamites, a secret, heretical sect that practiced nudity and sexual promiscuity in an attempt to re-create the innocence of the Garden of Eden. The central panel of *Garden of Earthly Delights,* according to Fraenger, did not condemn free love but glorified it. He insisted that the triptych served as an altarpiece in secret Adamite worship. Fraenger's theory has been overwhelmingly rejected by scholars, but it enjoyed a vogue for a while. Its popularity, in fact, reflected one of the problems in understanding Bosch. While Fraenger's fancy did not fit the historical evidence, it did fit some of the feelings that the paintings evoke in a modern viewer.

All of Bosch's paintings pulsate with a lavish symbolism that is obscure today but must have been widely understood five centuries ago. Dirk Bax has pored over antique Dutch plays, tales, poems, maxims, paintings, drawings and prints to unravel the symbolism. In one book, he devoted six long and detailed chapters to the symbols of a single painting, the *Saint Anthony Triptych.* In the lower corner of the left panel, for example, a monster on ice skates approaches three fiends who are hiding under a bridge across which pious men are helping an unconscious Saint Anthony. The monster (see cover), wearing a badge that Bax says can be recognized as the emblem of a messenger, bears a letter that is supposedly a protest of Saint Anthony's treatment. But the letter, according to Bax, is in mirror writing, a sure sign that the monster and the fiends are mocking the saint. The monster wears a funnel that symbolizes intemperance and wastefulness, sports a dry twig and a ball that signify licentious merrymaking, and has lopping ears that show its foolishness. All this might have been obvious to the artist's contemporaries when the work was created, but the average modern viewer can only hope to understand the overall intent of a Bosch painting, while regarding the scores of bizarre monsters and demons as a kind of dark and cruel comic relief.

A viewer may also feel a special force or emotion that Bosch did not intend because of the ways in which Western thought has changed in 500 years. This special reaction, in fact, may be the reason why Bosch fascinates art lovers in the 20th century. The *Saint Anthony Triptych* is a good example of the phenomenon. Saint Anthony, who lived in the late third and

Bibliothèque Municipale, Arras

Copy of self-portrait of elderly Bosch (original is lost) reveals the ravages of time and a "show me" stare.

early fourth centuries, devoted most of his life to meditation as a pious hermit in the Egyptian desert, and Bosch described the events of the saint's life by setting them in the contemporary, sinful world of the late Middle Ages. Demons and sinners try to torment and distract the saint by beating him and flying him through the sky, leading him to a brothel, exposing him to scenes of terrible destruction, and parading gluttons, adulterers, wastrels and blasphemers before him. A nude devil-queen tries to seduce him. In the background, a fire rages; some scholars believe this refers to "Saint Anthony's fire," known today as ergotism, a sickness caused by eating mold-contaminated grain. Victims suffered gangrene in their extremities, convulsions, hallucinations—also represented in the triptych—and agonizing pain. The afflicted invoked Saint Anthony's name for relief from the disease's symptoms. The saint is portrayed four times in the triptych, but not once does he look at any of the sinful scenes around him. He averts all temptations by refusing to see them. It is hard in these days not to feel anger at the saint for his indifference to the horrors. Bosch, however, did not intend to evoke that anger. In the 15th century, a man of Bosch's religious background would not have regarded Saint Anthony as indifferent, but as strong and pious enough to struggle against exposure to the evils in the world.

The *Garden of Earthly Delights*, probably painted between 1510 and 1515, also evokes sensations today that would have been foreign to Bosch. For a modern viewer, the central panel has an air of innocence, the gentle lovemaking of its naked, young people creating a mood of playfulness and joy. With earnest, childlike, wistful, pleasured features, they play in the open and make love only within shells and bubbles and fruit.

No one escapes; no one is saved

Yet for Bosch and the medieval mind, this world was brimming with symbols of sin—with water birds and fish and ripe strawberries to signify lewdness and lust, with evil crying out for damnation. As punishments, Bosch meted out some of the most terrible tortures ever devised by the human imagination. Sinners are strung on a harp, crushed between a lute and a book, abducted by beasts, severed at the neck, dipped into slime, swallowed by a bird, violated by a flute, kissed by a pig, cut open by swords, chewed by dogs, drowned in seas of fire. No one escapes; no one is saved. A modern viewer cannot help feeling anguish and anger at punishment that seems so enormously out of proportion to the sins.

A more recent interpretation of the triptych is gaining academic attention. Laurinda Dixon of Syracuse University, who has studied picture books and scientific manuscripts of the 15th century, sees the painting as an allegory of the alchemical distillation process. Alchemy was a philosophy as well as a legitimate science of the time. Among its practitioners were physicians and pharmacists and, less often, the charlatans and magicians who claimed to make gold from base metals. Throughout the triptych, says Dixon, alchemical symbols can be found. In the center panel, the red balls represent the perfect medicine, the elixir of life. And the fountain of life recalls the shape of a laboratory beaker or the "distillation chamber in which the opposites were mixed." So, too, do the glass bubbles and tubes appear similar to other alchemical devices. But most symbolic of alchemy is the egg, the vessel where all ingredients are combined; it appears in all four scenes of the triptych.

It is easier to understand Bosch when the medieval and modern minds have similar attitudes toward a sin. In the *Haywain* (a triptych that exists in two versions—one in the Prado and one at El Escorial), a wagon of hay moves slowly across the central panel while peasants, nuns and monks batter and murder one another for a chance to clutch at the hay. A pope

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Musée du Louvre, Paris

The Ship of Fools censures a monk, nuns, peasants. Dead branch, signifying worthlessness, serves as rudder.

and an emperor with their entourage follow the wagon, which—no one seems to notice—is pulled by demons toward retribution in the towers of hell. Bosch is mocking the sin of avarice, a sin that is still condemned in much the same way in modern popular literature.

The same sin is satirized in *Death of the Miser* (opposite). Even as Death enters the bedroom, the miser cannot concentrate on a crucifix toward which an angel guides his gaze. Instead, he reaches for a bag of gold proffered by a demon who, Bosch shows us in the foreground, helped him hoard it earlier.

Death of the Miser fits into a series of smaller paintings in which Bosch mocks sinners and fools but does not show the terrible tortures in store for them. Thus the mood is darkly comic. In *The Ship of Fools* (left), he expresses his contempt for a boatful of reveling gluttons, including a monk and a nun who sing, drink, gorge themselves and bob for a hanging bun, while naked men, a drunken jester and others cavort around them. Bosch was obviously furious at the excesses both of carnival merrymakers and of sinners in the religious orders. In *Cure of Folly* (p. 50), a gullible fool allows a quack doctor to cure him of his madness by extracting the stone of foolishness from his head. Folly and deceit are the targets of Bosch's scorn.

A deep pessimism pervaded his scenes from the life of Christ; and the painter, even in his treatment of the most traditional themes, could not keep from lashing out in a furious rage at human evil. On first glance, for example, the Prado's *Adoration of the Magi* triptych seems idyllic. But in the background the peace is disturbed by military maneuvers and bloody struggles with beasts. Moreover, the mysterious people who lurk in the barn and stare out at the Virgin and Child have malevolent expressions. They will show up again (this time even more exaggerated) in another Bosch painting, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent. They are the fanatical, demented, crazed tormentors and executioners of Christ.

Bosch was about 66 when he died in 's-Hertogenbosch in 1516. The official notices of his death described him as a "very famous painter." He was, in fact, one of the most popular and most respected painters of his time, imitated by many younger artists. Pieter Bruegel the Elder, born barely 25 miles to the southwest of 's-Hertogenbosch a dozen years after Bosch's death, was the most successful, working in the style of Bosch before moving on to the creation of his own great allegorical paintings of village life.

Bruegel's similarity to Bosch was so close that centuries later the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts in Brussels attributed *The Fall of the Rebel Angels* to Bosch—until it discovered Bruegel's signature beneath the frame.

But Bosch's reputation began to wane. By 1600, the world of Brabant had changed so much that people no longer understood his symbolism. In 1629, the Dutch troops of the Calvinist Prince of Orange occupied 's-Hertogenbosch and its Cathedral of St. John, removing all "popish" paintings. Nothing was left there of Bosch. Only in Spain, the strongest and most medieval of the Catholic powers during the Reformation, did Bosch's reputation hold for a while. The Spanish kings, through their family ties with the dukes of Burgundy and later through control of the Netherlands, gathered up much of Bosch's work and took it to El Escorial (SMITHSONIAN, December 1987) outside Madrid. But even in Spain, doubts arose over Bosch's pessimism, symbolism and attacks on the faltering clergy. By 1605, the Spanish monk José de Sigüenza had to defend the paintings against accusations that they were "tainted by heresy." In 1621, the Spanish poet Francisco de Quevedo ridiculed rival poet Luis de Gongora for writing "absurd rubbish, you Bosch among the poets, nothing but devils, buttocks and cod-pieces." Hardly anyone took Bosch seriously in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Scholarly interest in Bosch revived at the turn of the 20th century and mushroomed after a major exhibition of his works in Rotterdam in 1936. Popular writers soon discovered him and proclaimed their find of a 15th-century Freudian or a medieval Surrealist expressing his repressed desires and dreams in bizarre modern symbols. No one seemed to care that his symbolism was rooted in the folk literature of his times. One critic called Bosch "the first spark of that bonfire, Salvador Dali." Dali, who, as a student in Madrid, knew the works of Bosch, felt compelled to deny the influence. "I myself am the anti-Hieronymus Bosch," he proclaimed.

Yet even without Freudian and Surrealist imagery, there is little doubt that Bosch somehow strikes a chord with his modern admirers. Defending Bosch almost 400 years ago, Fra Sigüenza wrote, "If there are any absurdities here, they are ours, not his." Bosch described terrible, unbearable holocausts crushing mankind for its sins. In a century of turmoil and strife, it is hard not to feel that the absurdities pictured before us may, after all, be our own.

In *Death of the Miser*, avarice is the target. As Death enters, the miser remains intent on his bag of gold.

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By Michael Weisskopf

Plastic reaps a grim harvest in the oceans of the world

We build this material to last; now, after years of dumping it into the sea, it's come back to haunt us, killing and maiming marine life

It is dawn on the Gulf of Mexico, nature's rush hour. Sunbathers and pleasure boaters, sleeping off the arid heat of July, haven't yet descended on the shore. All along the water's edge, seabirds strut and dive for fish, while ghost crabs and ground squirrels scurry for food. But this morning there's a human intrusion. A large, bearded man slowly drives a tan pickup truck down the beach, his right hand gripping the steering wheel, his left continuously punching a portable computer to record what the tide brought in.

As Tony Amos jabs computer keys programmed for the most common discoveries, he rattles off the items in the staccato tone of an inventory clerk:

"Plastic bottle, plastic bottle, plastic bag, Styrofoam, plastic glove, plastic lids, foam packaging, plastic rope, plastic produce sack, Karo syrup jug, six-pack ring, another glove, Styrofoam cup, cup, plastic bag, plastic fishing line, plastic bleach bottle, plastic egg carton, piece of plastic net, 50-pound plastic bag of sea salt, Bic lighter.

"More synthetic gloves—this is going to be a world-record glove day. . . . Here's an interesting plastic bottle, mineral water made in France. There's a Mexican bleach, a green bottle. You see a lot of them. . . . Oh God, more gloves. . . ."

A hopelessly entangled sea turtle struggles to free itself from an abandoned curtain of plastic fishnet.

Surveying debris washed up on San Jose Island, Texas, Tony Amos examines a Mexican bleach bottle.

Finally he brakes and gets out to inspect a specimen for which there is a special computer key designated "dead." A three-foot-long redfish, its scales shimmering in the sun, has washed ashore. The fish is ringed tightly by a black plastic gasket, which has caused a deep gash and eroded the gills. Apparently, months earlier, the fish had darted into the gasket, which had lodged behind its gill cover. As the fish grew, the plastic ring became a noose, damaging the gills and thus eventually cutting off the animal's supply of oxygen.

Amos has come to expect such casualties. An oceanographer at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute who has combed the same seven and a half miles of beach every other day for ten years, he is one of a growing number of scientists who are documenting plastic pollution of the ocean and its perils for the creatures that live there.

The thousands of plastic objects that Amos logs in during every sweep of Mustang Island's beach represent a tiny fraction of the debris floating a few miles off the Texas shore. And the problem extends far beyond the Gulf. Throughout the world, important water bodies—especially the oceans—have become virtual wastebins for the tons of plastic products dumped daily by commercial fishermen, military vessels, merchant ships, passenger liners, pleasure boats, offshore oil and gas drilling operations, the plastics industry and sewage treatment plants.

No one knows how much plastic pollutes the seas. In 1975, the National Academy of Sciences estimated that seven million tons of garbage are dumped into the world's oceans every year. There was no overall breakdown for plastics, but the academy itemized trash from several specific sources. Measured in terms of weight, less than 1 percent of that litter was categorized as plastic. But some experts believe such findings greatly understate the problem because plastic is so much lighter than other debris. The production of plastics has more than doubled since 1975. Plastic soft drink bottles, for instance, were not introduced until the late '70s. This dramatic increase is reflected in more recent studies of marine debris. A 1985 report estimated that merchant ships dump 450,000 plastic containers each day into international waters.

Another measure of the problem is the vast amount of plastic that is washed ashore. Mustang Island and other tourist beaches along the Gulf of Mexico, a body of water that shelters a busy international port and hosts extensive offshore oil activities, look like cluttered landfills. One three-hour-long cleanup of 157 miles of Texas shoreline in September 1987 reaped 31,773 plastic bags, 30,295 plastic bottles, 15,631 plastic six-pack rings, 28,540 plastic lids, 1,914 disposable diapers, 1,040 tampon applicators and 7,460 plastic milk jugs.

The author, a staff writer for the Washington Post, *has been covering the issue of marine plastic pollution for the past several years.*

The oceanographer worries that people will begin to accept ubiquitous trash as part of the environment.

It is one of the sad ironies of modern times that the synthetic developed by Man to outlast and outperform products made from natural materials is ravaging nature in the process. Since the exigencies of World War II spurred large-scale production of plastic as a substitute for scarce resources, it has become the favored American material—more durable than wood and rubber, lighter than metals, safer than glass and less expensive than leather. It is present in virtually every product line from Army helmets to artificial hearts to Styrofoam cups.

Today, the plastics industry occupies a major place in the U.S. economy, employing more than one million workers in almost every state and in 1985 producing $138 billion in finished goods. The 1.2 trillion cubic inches of plastic manufactured in that year was nearly double the combined output of steel, aluminum and copper.

As with all revolutions, however, there is a "tradeoff," as Ronald Bruner, of the Society of the Plastics Industry, describes it. The very durability of the synthetic has created a massive disposal problem, especially in the marine environment where seagoers traditionally unload their domestic wastes and gear. Bruner contends that it is not plastics themselves that are the problem, but rather the way people dispose of them. Regardless of where the blame lies, the problem has caught up with us. Whereas other materials degrade relatively quickly or sink to the bottom, plastic persists. Buoyant, it floats on the surface and can be easily mistaken for food. Often transparent, it nets or entwines animals that cannot see it. It is the most common type of sea litter today.

Like individual mines floating around

A number of scientists believe that plastic is the most far-reaching, man-made threat facing many marine species, annually killing or maiming tens of thousands of seabirds, seals, sea lions and sea otters, and hundreds of whales, dolphins, porpoises and sea turtles. "You can go to an oil spill or a toxic chemical spill and see animals struggling to survive," says David Laist, senior policy and program analyst for the U.S. Marine Mammal Commission. "But those dangers are concentrated in one place. With plastic pollution, it's a different situation. Plastics are like individual mines floating around the ocean just waiting for victims."

Until only recently, no laws have specifically prohibited ocean disposal and dumping of plastics. As a result, vessels worldwide have made the ocean their home—and their dumping grounds, disposing of wastes with a wantonness that never would be permitted on land. Joe Cox, of the American Institute of Merchant Shipping, explained the rationale for dumping: "You go weeks without seeing any other people and you begin to think there's an awful lot of water out there. Taking it down to the baseline of human behavior, it's just easier to do it."

Plastic's devastating effect on an entire population of marine animals was first observed in the late 1970s. The victims were the northern fur seals of the Pribilof Islands, which are located in the Bering Sea west of Alaska. Scientists from the National Marine Mammal Laboratory (NMML—a division of the National Marine Fisheries Service) found that, beginning in 1976, the seal population was declining at a rate of 4 to 6 percent annually. They concluded that plastic entanglement was killing up to 40,000 seals a year.

Naturally curious, the seals were playing with fragments of plastic netting or packing straps floating in the water, often catching their necks in the webbing, according to Charles Fowler, an NMML biologist who visits the islands every summer during mating season. The debris can constrict a seal's movements, preventing normal feeding. Unable to extricate itself, the animal eventually drowns, starves to death, or dies of exhaustion or infection from deep wounds caused by

the tightening of the material around its back and neck. Many seal pups grow into the plastic collars, which tighten as their necks thicken. In time, says Fowler, the plastic severs the seal's arteries or strangles it.

Fowler says that often more than one seal can become entangled in the same piece of netting. He once came upon a mother and pup whose necks were ringed this way. "Every time the mother moved," the biologist recalls, "she dragged the pup along with her. It was a pathetic sight."

Some of the fur seals are also dying in the large plastic nets used by foreign fishing boats in the North Pacific. Draped like curtains for miles across the ocean, these nets become death traps for many unintended victims, including birds. Unable to see the translucent material, they dive for fish trapped in the nets, get caught and then drown.

Whales are also among the victims. They sometimes lunge for schools of fish and surface with netting caught in their mouths or wrapped around their heads and tails. A whale dragging hundreds of feet of net may be unable to eat. The extra weight impedes the whale's movement and can exhaust it. Beached whales have been found on both the East and West coasts, their bodies emaciated and entangled in plastic net. In the fall of 1982, a humpback whale tangled in 50 to 100 feet of net washed up on a Cape Cod beach. It was starving and so thin that its ribs were showing. "In a couple of hours, the animal was so weak it simply died," said Phil Clapham, cetacean research director at the Center for Coastal Studies in Provincetown. "At that point, it had been digesting its stomach."

An unintended—but deadly—toll

Herring gull's neck is encircled by six-pack ring, impairing ability to fly and eventually to breathe.

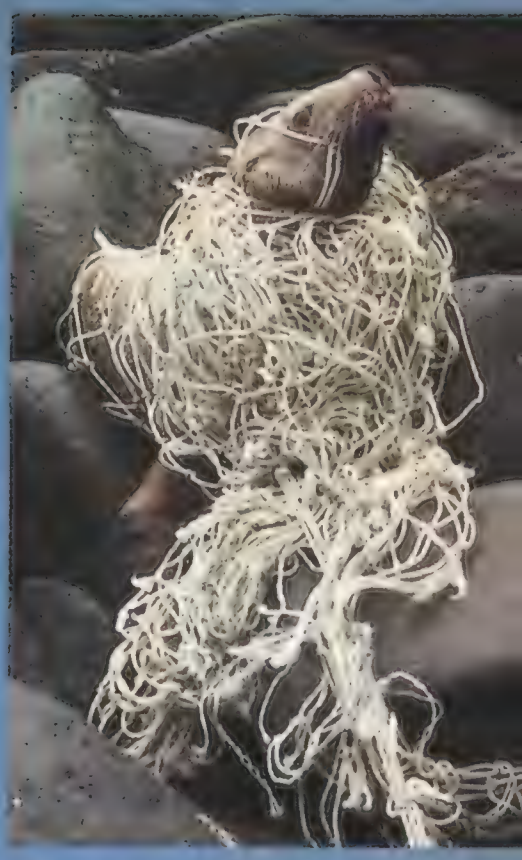
Redfish swam into plastic onion sack, dying when its snagged gills prevented it from backing out.

Mounting rescue efforts for whales

In the past four years, Clapham's center has received reports of entanglement of about 20 humpbacks, an endangered species with not more than 8,000 survivors in the North Atlantic. Twelve were dangerously ensnared; two eventually died. The center mounts rescue efforts to save entangled whales. One success story involves a 25-ton female humpback, which staffers called Ibis because a line under her tail suggested the long, curved bill of that elegant bird. A playful, friendly whale that swam near boats in the early 1980s, she was a favorite of scientists and whale watchers along the New England coast.

In the summer of 1984, Ibis got tangled in 300 feet of net. She was briefly seen in October and then not spotted again. Experts at the center feared she had drowned. But on Thanksgiving Day Ibis, very thin, tired and still badly entangled, appeared just outside Provincetown Harbor. Crews in small, inflatable boats approached her and managed to hook a rope onto the tangled net. The rope was attached to buoyant floats, which were designed to thwart Ibis' attempts to dive.

After trying to submerge a few times, Ibis gave up. She simply lay on the water's surface, allowing the rescuers to pull the net out of her mouth and off her tail. Freed in two hours, she recovered and two weeks later set forth for her winter migration. A healthy whale returned the following May, and by June 1986, Ibis was swimming with a calf. "A lot of champagne was flowing among the whale scientists on the East Coast," recalls Clapham.



Its body bound in plastic net, sea lion in Alaska can barely move.

Wrapped in fishing line, brown pelican died in Florida mangrove

A monk seal pup, unable to extricate its snout from a plastic ring, lies starving on a Hawaiian beach.

Loggerhead turtle on a beach near Galveston, Texas, choked to death after swallowing large plastic bag.

Such happy endings are rare for the victims of plastic entanglement. Along Florida's coasts, brown pelicans diving for fish sometimes go for fishermen's bait and get hooked. Sport fishermen will usually cut the line, thinking the pelican will then be free. But the line is a killer. Sometimes the synthetic wraps so tightly around the bird's feet and wings that these limbs atrophy. More often, the lines snag branches of the squat, gnarled mangrove trees clustered on the islands where the birds traditionally roost.

"Then the birds just hang there until they're skeletons," says Ralph Heath, who runs a seabird rescue mission near St. Petersburg. "They don't last long once they're suspended from the tree limbs. They can't bite the line loose. They can't shake it loose. So, they keep thrashing until they die."

From a distance, the mangrove islands along Florida's west coast dazzle in the sun, ornamented by large pelicans perched on boughs. But inside the tropical grove, skeletons of seabirds dangle from plastic

strands, feathers broken in the furious struggle for survival, splintered wings fallen to the swampy island floor. Since Heath founded his Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary in 1972 (SMITHSONIAN, August 1974), he has witnessed hundreds of such hanging deaths. He has rescued thousands of other entangled birds, freeing them from tree limbs or cutting off lines and hooks.

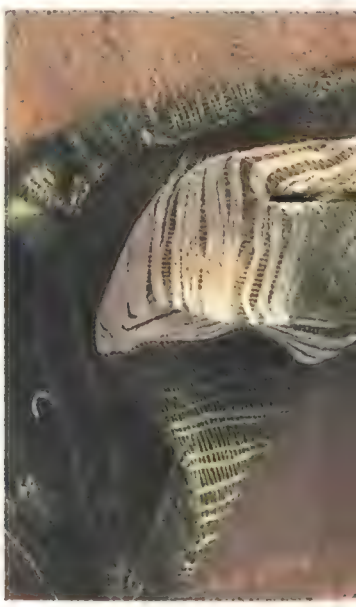
Cruising Boca Ciega Bay in a 24-foot motorboat, Heath anchors near a mangrove island owned by the sanctuary. He is looking for injured birds. An assistant hurls Spanish sardines into the water, luring dozens of pelicans from the rookery. Heath spots a bird with a bloody wing and scoops it up with a net. A piece of fishing line is wound around its flank, deeply etching its humerus and cutting into tissue. Heath carefully disentangles the bird and returns it to the water. "If it wraps any tighter, it acts like a tourniquet and cuts off circulation," he explains. During the next 20 minutes he nets and disentangles five more birds. "Once that happens, it's all over."

Heath has found pelican chicks dead in their nests, strangled by hundreds of feet of fishing line that had probably been dragged there by their parents. He has seen pelicans garroted by plastic six-pack rings—including one with a fish stuck in its throat, held there firmly by the plastic yoke.

In small shapes and sizes, plastic resembles the food supply of some marine creatures. But it is dangerous to consume. Seabirds, mistaking spherical resin pellets (the raw material used to manufacture plastic products) for fish eggs and other natural food, suffer intestinal blockage and ulceration. Whales are also victims of plastic ingestion. On New Year's Day 1984, an infant pigmy sperm whale beached itself alongside its dying mother on Galveston Island in the Gulf of Mexico. Named Lafitte after a French pirate who had once landed there, the calf was taken to an aquarium and nursed. Lafitte seemed to be healthy, eating some squid and diving playfully in the holding tank. Suddenly he stopped eating and on January 11, he died. Dr. Raymond Tarpley, a Texas A&M University veterinarian, participated in the necropsy. The conclusion: Lafitte had died of severe infection of the abdominal cavity lining. In the animal's stomach he found, among other items, a 30-gallon plastic garbage-can liner, a plastic bread wrapper and a corn-chip bag.

Most worrisome is the danger of plastic to indiscriminate eaters such as ocean turtles, especially hatchlings that spend their early lives at sea surviving off surface organisms. To a turtle, says zoologist George Balazs of the National Marine Fisheries Service in Honolulu, a transparent plastic bag or particle can look like a jellyfish, plankton or the larval stage of a crab. Once in the turtle's intestines, he adds, the indigestible material can block fecal matter, prevent assimilation of nutrients and make the turtle too buoyant to dive for food. It is gruesome—but true—that dead turtles with plastic bags and fishing line extending from both ends have been found in the Gulf of Mexico, in the Hawaiian Islands and along the East coast. "When turtles eat that much plastic," says Balazs, "you reach a point of no return. Their ability to swim around is severely impaired. Then they're at the mercy of the ocean."

In a way, the marine plastic pollution problem crept up on American lawmakers. While several international conventions and federal laws have included provisions to limit or prohibit marine dumping of chemicals, oil and other substances, none of them has applied directly to the more recently recognized problem of plastic debris. The 1973 International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) contained an annex (Annex V) that



Gallery of plastic objects that threaten marine dwellers includes polystyrene foam particles at left, which are mistaken for food by feeding sea turtles, and swallowed; they then clog the animals' intestines.

would prohibit ocean disposal of plastics, limit other garbage disposal and require ports to provide facilities for receiving trash from incoming ships. But that annex needed separate ratification and it languished, lacking the requisite number of signatory nations to become international law (at least 15 nations representing half of the world's gross commercial shipping tonnage). The holdouts included the United States.

A key turning point occurred in 1984 when a conference on marine debris was held in Honolulu under the auspices of the National Marine Fisheries Service (a division of NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). That meeting brought into focus the scope of the problem and led to the founding of NOAA's Marine Entanglement Research Program. It also mobilized governmental agencies and environmental groups to push for ratification of Annex V.

In the wake of that conference, Congress was urged by the U.S. Coast Guard, the Marine Mammal Commission, NOAA and numerous environmental groups to ratify the annex. Finally, in the last week of 1987, the United States completed its ratification process, pushing the percentage of tonnage represented by signatory nations over the level necessary for Annex V to become effective.

Parties to the law now have one year to put their domestic programs in place. Thus, beginning on December 31, 1988, it will be illegal for ships registered in signatory nations, and all other ships within the waters of those countries that prohibit dumping, to discard plastics into the ocean.

"I think that it is a remarkable thing that it happened," says Kathy O'Hara, who is a marine biologist and plastics specialist for the Center for Environmental Education. "It was an incredible public-awareness event. A lot of the environmental community's energy was focused for the last two years on U.S. ratification. It definitely will make a difference."

But O'Hara and other environmentalists also point out that although the annex will help, it will by no means solve the problem. It only deals with ocean disposal, for one thing, ignoring pollution from such land sources as sewage treatment plants and plastics manufacturers. In addition, nations not party to the annex don't have to adhere to its conditions unless their ships are in the waters of party nations.

Moreover, it will be difficult to get compliance. Consider, for instance, the disposal choices facing a captain bringing his ship into U.S. waters from a foreign port. An already existing American law requires that any garbage on this ship that has been in contact with food must be incinerated or sterilized before port disposal. (This law's purpose is to prevent the spread of pests or infectious diseases.) Facing incineration fees as high as $450 per truckload, however, fewer than 3 percent of ships now bring their trash into American ports, often choosing instead to throw it overboard at sea. Much of this trash is plastic. Although Annex V will severely restrict this option, the temptation to cheat is obvious. The U.S. Coast Guard, which will enforce Annex V for the United States, is currently developing regulations for its implementation.

There is the additional problem of military vessels, which are exempt from Annex V. American warships alone discharge four tons of plastic every day, says Larry Koss, environmental program manager for the U.S. Navy's shipboard program. While U.S. military vessels are being required by Congress to comply with Annex V within five years, each signatory nation will be handling this question independently. Koss says the Navy is exploring the idea of a special thermal waste processor for plastics that will compact large loads of

Plastic glove at far right is also often mistaken for food (jellyfish) and ingested. Various plastic rings, gaskets, woven produce bags, netting and fishing line kill by ensnaring or entangling victims.

the synthetic trash into small bricks that can be more easily stored and carried by ships to port.

The plastics industry also is addressing the problem of plastics disposal. One spotlight is turned on degradable plastics; the technology for some types is already in place and research continues for wider and appropriate applications. Several companies now offer degradable resins for sale, and a few manufacturers in the United States, Italy and Canada are making degradable plastic bags. A photodegradable agricultural mulch has been available for several years, and to comply with laws in 11 states, manufacturers have developed six-pack rings that also break down in sunlight.

There has been some progress, too, in the area of recycling. Plastics industry sources say that, in this country, 20 percent of all plastic soft drink bottles are being recycled into items like polyfill stuffing, paintbrushes and industrial strapping. Technology is also available for "commingled" recycling—mixing different types of plastics in the recycling process—and that process is now being used to produce a new building material called plastic lumber.

Ronald Bruner, spokesman for the industry's trade association, says his members feel the "black eye" of stories linking their products to wildlife losses. The environmental concerns are warranted, he says, but they should not overshadow the great benefits of the plastics revolution. "Look at how many human lives plastic saves. Take disposable products like syringes that prevent the spread of disease; in medical procedures, the use of plastic in sutures, prosthetic devices."

Meanwhile, back on Mustang Island, Tony Amos drives his truck along the beach every other morning, documenting the plastic debris that the tide has brought in. "I never know what I'm going to find next," says Amos, the professional trashcomber, who estimates that up to 90 percent of the plastic items he finds are dumped off ships. To prove his point, he boasts a personal collection of plastic containers that could have originated only on foreign vessels—Korean shampoo, Cuban bleach, Moroccan mineral oil and toilet bowl cleaners from Hong Kong and Czechoslovakia. He agrees that Annex V is a solid step toward addressing the problem, but he points out, as do many others, that further steps must follow. People in his line of work don't tend to get overly optimistic. "I have pictures of girls in bikinis lying among piles of the stuff on the beach," says Amos. "People have almost got used to this. Maybe it'll become acceptable—part of the environment." It's something to think about.

The body of an albatross has rotted away, exposing the enduring plastic items that ravaged its insides.

Ralph Heath, founder of a Florida seabird sanctuary, disentangles dead juvenal pelican from fishing line.

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By Ezra Bowen

At 100, still the champ of winter's snowy Olympics

There were two Blizzards of '88, one East, one West, but in national memory they have congealed into one chilling legend

The morning of January 12, 1888, came up so warm in Dakota Territory that a bunch of children arrived without overcoats at their one-room school near the village of Huron. During recess, so the story goes, they played outdoors in shirtsleeves as though it were an April day. Just two months later, college boys at Princeton, New Jersey, lolled on the sunny campus lawn, while in the suburbs of New York City crocuses poked through softening soil. The weather forecast in the New York *Herald* of Monday, March 12, read: "Weather today in New York City and vicinity promises to be generally fair and colder, preceded by partial cloudiness near the coast. Tomorrow it promises to be slightly warmer and generally fair."

At neither end of winter, clearly, was anyone ready for what was coming: a pair of blizzards, one in the East, one in the West, that created a higher sum of havoc—greater loss of life and more widespread and lasting disruption of commerce—than has occurred in any recorded American winter before or since.

The second week of January, a tongue of low pressure extended along the eastern slope of the Rockies, drawing warm, moist air up from the Gulf of Mexico, dramatically raising temperatures into the 40s on the normally frigid plains. The mild days were a timely blessing for the West's ranchers and farmers: across the Great Plains they were still trying to recover from the previous winter when 40-below weather and ten days of wind-driven snow froze hundreds of thousands of cattle in their tracks, or starved them out, their

Engraving shows start of storm as it blasts New York City, twirling and hurling pedestrians about.

Soon there was nobody left on the streets, as the wind began to blow over trolley cars, and snowdrifts cut Manhattan off from the rest of the world. In upstate New York, the blizzard dumped four feet of snow.

Minnie (left) and pupils were later photographed at refurbished sod schoolhouse they had escaped from.

G. A. Gregory
Deane
Song of the Great Blizzard
1888
THIRTEEN WERE SAVED
OR NEBRASKA'S FEARLESS MAID.
MISS MINNIE FREEMAN, SCHOOL TEACHER AND HEROINE
Whose Pluck and Good Judgment Exhibited during the Recent Fearful Blizzard in the Myra Valley District, Nebraska. Saved the Lives of thirteen helpless little Children.
SONG AND CHORUS
by Wm. Vincent,
PUBLISHED BY
LYON & HEALY, CHICAGO.
4
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Heroine of Western blizzard, schoolmarm Minnie Freeman, 18, was much celebrated in song and story.

noses rubbed bloody from trying to nuzzle through to the buried brown stubble. Many homesteaders had been ruined; others, hanging on, hoped this January warm spell would give horses and sheep, along with the cattle, a start toward recovery.

No chance.

By dawn on January 12, icy weather, now traveling at 45 miles per hour, swept southward from Canada to Dakota and Nebraska. Animals were first to sense the abrupt change in the air's texture. George Duernberger, a Faulk County farmer in eastern Dakota, was driving his tram, with an old mare and several colts trotting alongside, to get water from a well about half a mile from his homestead. No breeze stirred; smoke went straight up from the chimney of his house. "The animals had been drinking," he later recalled, "when 'Old Bawly' threw up her head and snorted. She jerked the halter rope from my hand, nipped one of her younger companions, and started for the barn as fast as she could tear. . . . I straightened the tram toward home and muttered a prayer. Then the wind came. Everything was blotted out, the trail disappeared, the horses' heads were not visible. . . ."

In the schoolyard near Huron, the coatless children looked up to see something rolling toward them "like big bales of cotton, each one bound tightly with heavy cords of silver." A rainbow-tinted halo rimmed the sun. The teacher clanged the bell. The last child had barely rushed to shelter when the wind nearly blew the frail building from its foundation.

At 11 A.M. in Lisbon, Dakota, the postmaster noted that the thermometer went to zero "and the snow flew

When roof threatened to blow off, she tied children together with twine and got everyone to safety.

Though searches began even before blizzard quit, on the Great Plains more than 500 people died.

so no one could see across the street [even] with a bright light burning." The Denver weather station log reads, "Instrument shelter was blown down, tearing some of the roof with it."

Inside the Huron schoolhouse the freight-train boom of the wind forced the teacher to bend and shout into each child's ear as she bundled her flock into any warm clothing on hand, while the thermometer dropped below zero, a fall that would total some 50 degrees within 12 hours. The smallest tots whimpered, begging to go home to their families, but no one was permitted to venture into the frigid whiteout. To the south, near O'Neill, Nebraska, schoolmarm Grace McCoy and her charges at first treated the blizzard like a lark, piling coal into the stove and gobbling their lunches while they watched snow sift up through a knothole in the floor to form a small, white volcano. As night wore on, the older boys had to break up desks to keep the room snug against the mounting storm.

Little Charley Bard, a Nebraska boy of 8 or 9, got caught at the far edge of the furrowed cornfield beside his school. Wind and whirling sleet knocked him to the earth, where he lay, unable to get up or to open his eyes. With a country boy's presence of mind, he started to worm along the ground, groping from one furrow to another, taking his direction from the set of the ragged corn rows. After perhaps 20 minutes that must have seemed like as many hours, Charley bumped into the side of the school building, felt along to the door and pounded till it was jerked open and he tumbled inside.

All across the plains, people prayed hard and did their best to tend livestock. Near Parkston, Dakota, rancher Orrin Hayes plunged from his house to coax his cattle from their feedlot to the shelter of a shed. He managed to put a few inside, but the blizzard forced him to take shelter in the barn, where he—and his family back in the house—soon realized he was dangerously marooned. His wife tied a clothesline to their 18-year-old son and payed out the rope as the youth staggered off in a rescue attempt. By blind luck the boy fetched up against the barn and made the line fast at that end. Then he and his father overhanded themselves back to the safety of the house. The cattle still caught in the feedlot stood immobilized by the cold, snow caking their muzzles and swiftly building in drifts around their flanks. Soon they would be stiff as ice, dead of cold or suffocation.

Through the night the wind and cold intensified. Schools, farms, villages and, finally, major cities found themselves completely cut off. Bulletins and journal entries tell the outstanding reach of the winter weather. From Texas: "A veritable 'blizzard' is raging in Galveston to-day." From California: "Slush ice was floating down the Sacramento River, the first time since 1854 such a thing has happened. . . . On a small pond . . . boys were skating."

Even on the high plains, where formidable winters tend to be the norm and a gale-whipped winter storm can shut down superhighways even today, the suddenness and appalling intensity of the weather a cen-

The author, former Outdoor Editor of Sports Illustrated, *loves snow. He last wrote for* SMITHSONIAN *(July 1987) about the Constitution.*

The Western blizzard followed two bad winters. By the time it ended, hundreds of thousands of cattle, like this one painted in 1886 by Charles M. Russell, had starved.

tury ago trapped and punished men and animals. Along Beaver Creek in western Nebraska two Omaha Indians, Charley Stabler and Rough Clouds, with their dog Bear Claws, were caught out, and curled up together all night in the lee of a big tree. By morning the men were trapped in an ice cave formed by drifts whose inner surface had at first melted from their body heat, then frozen solid into a thick, hard wall. Rough Clouds wrapped himself in his robe and lay down to sleep—forever. Charley kept active, stamping his feet and rubbing his body, trying to break out. Near midday on the 15th, Charley heard the dog whimpering, digging hard at the snow. Suddenly Bear Claws broke through, and with his help Charley struggled out. Too weak to walk, he literally crawled through drifts all afternoon, the dog at his side, until, at nightfall, he reached a farmhouse, where the family heard him thump against the door. They warmed him, fed him. Charley not only survived intact, but lived another 22 years, retelling, ad infinitum, his tale of endurance. Bear Claws lived to a ripe old age, too, and Charley always made a point of asking people to be kind to the dog who had saved his life.

As the night of the blizzard raged on, the mood in Grace McCoy's Nebraska classroom sank from festive to despairing. "After midnight," she was to recall, "it seemed to me we would all die, for we were getting cold, and the storm was howling as fiercely as ever. I told the children we would all kneel and pray God to keep us through the terrible storm. Our prayers were answered," she continued, "and about 3 o'clock the wind went down."

The seats and desks were all burned up by then. "The schoolroom looked like a snowhouse, with only a path around the stove bare of snow." At first light the children looked outside and could suddenly make out a lantern's glow from a nearby farm. They all headed for it and with their teacher were welcomed and fed, none the worse for the night.

The Huron schoolteacher kept her pupils safe through the blizzard, too. In the morning she took the youngsters to her own modest shack, only a hundred yards from the school, fed them from a hastily kindled stove fire, then bundled them off to their own homes.

Many were not so lucky. In Dakota, a Bon Homme County teacher tried to lead her 16 pupils a bare quarter-mile to the nearest farmhouse. No one survived. In the following days, as the weather abated, telegraph lines were repaired, railroads and country lanes reopened and the West tried to count its losses. The *Omaha Republican* of January 15 headlined "ITS FRIGHTFUL RECORD/The Terrible Work of Thursday Night's Blizzard/Over a Hundred Dead Found and Many Still/Unaccounted For. . . ."

No one will ever know the correct totals, for in those last years of the frontier, even during the best of times, cowboys in remote line shacks, Indians on the reserves and settlers in crude soddies in the back counties might die, uncounted. A history of South Dakota, published 16 years later, claimed 112 dead from that state alone. Like numbers were reported in Nebraska, Minnesota and Iowa.

Tales of heroism surfaced in the hundreds, many about teachers like Grace McCoy. One Minnie Freeman, a stalwart young schoolmarm, really did no more than the rest but somehow caught the nation's fancy as *the* heroine of the storm. Newspapers were soon hawk-

Wherever the snows fell, steam engines were buried in drifts, and rail passengers found themselves hopelessly marooned. This one was stalled in northern Michigan.

ing her picture for $1 ($8 per dozen). Admiring strangers, mostly male, deluged her with gifts, and even a rumor, attributed to a child in the class, that she had to be helped from the building by her students did not dim the luster of her national renown. The January blizzard came to be known as the "schoolchildren's storm," but save for the pure chance that the cold fronts and warm fronts had collided at midmorning, a time when children were in or around their schoolhouses rather than walking on the naked prairie, the toll would have been tenfold worse.

Among livestock, it was. Some ranchers had more than 90 percent of their stock wiped out. For all serious purposes, the classic days of open-range cattle-running died in the late '80s, done in as much by the weather as by the more widely attributed effects of settlement and barbed wire. In a significant way a whole era of the Wild West can be said to have ended with the big blizzard.

Meanwhile, back East, as Westerners say, right into the second weekend of March, the Middle Atlantic and New England states had a normal winter. And on Saturday, March 10, in fact, it was unseasonably warm. In New York's Central Park, buds showed on the trees! Long Island potato farmers were putting in their new crop. Walt Whitman, no longer at the top of his game, penned a dreadful verse to the nascent season ("Forth from its sunny nook of shelter'd grace—, / innocent, golden, calm as the dawn, / The spring's first dandelion shows its trustful face"). At Ridley's department store at 315 Grand Street, buyer John Meisinger was being joshed because he had just laid out $1,200 for a stock of snow shovels. That day, the Washington, D.C. office of the U.S. Signal Service, parent to the present National Weather Service, had predicted "fair weather throughout the Atlantic States."

But a low-pressure trough was marching eastward at a rate of 600 miles per day, dumping snow onto Kentucky and Tennessee, dropping the temperature toward freezing in Georgia. The Signal Service in Washington knew all this, as did its principal weather "prophet" in New York City, Elias (Farmer) Dunn, the man who was about to write the *Herald*'s cheery confirming prediction of fair and warmer for New York. Like other weather station chiefs, Dunn was linked by telephone and telegraph (with carrier pigeon backup) to 170 regular government weather stations all over the country. Some 2,000 volunteers also regularly funneled advisories to the service. Its telegraphic bulletin Saturday evening included snow in the central South, heavy rain here and there, but nothing really ominous. Dunn and others thought the storms to the south would probably dissipate or curve out to sea. Thereupon the service shut down, as was its weekend custom, to reopen at 5 P.M. Sunday.

Sunday afternoon, a hard rain pelted the city, with the winds rising and the thermometer dropping. By evening some streets had frozen slick; telephone and telegraph lines began to blow down under the accumulating weight of ice. Back in his office again, Dunn tried to contact Washington. No answer; some 400 circuits from the capital were out, too. All the service's carrier pigeons were grounded. There was no real way to warn anyone about what was coming.

By 10 P.M. wintry, hurricane-force winds erupted at Cape Henlopen, Delaware. While the tempest's center edged northward, the air crackled with electricity, the ghostly green of Saint Elmo's fire outlining spars and

rigging at sea. Within a few hours, along the Maryland and Delaware coasts, wind and sea drove ashore—or sank—more than 100 vessels, many in well-protected waters. Thirty perished that night in Philadelphia harbor alone. One sailor lashed himself to his vessel's shrouds to keep from being blown overboard but froze to death anyway.

New Yorkers awoke Monday to discover ten inches of snow swiftly whirling into drifts on the sidewalks. Underlying ice stalled horse-drawn trolleys, carriages and wagons. It was no day to be venturing out, but 1888 was a year of economic recession; jobs were hard to keep and most people walked to work, though the trek might be several miles. So thousands bundled up in mufflers, bearskin coats, rubber boots, blankets, even bits of rugging, and pushed out into the streets. Others took the faltering trolleys or steam-powered commuter trains that for a while chuffed bravely through drifts that covered the tracks to the suburbs. The main rail lines in from Boston and Philadelphia, and the track from Albany shut down when trains stalled helplessly in deepening drifts.

Like the prairie children outside their schools two months before, some Manhattan pedestrians were knocked flat by winds that gusted, it was said, to 70 mph. Trolleys slewed off their tracks. Some actually blew over, to be deserted where they lay by crew and passengers. Mayor Abram Hewitt never showed up at City Hall, but the people who did make it to work found little or nothing to do. At the Produce Exchange, 95 stubborn traders out of the 1,700 who normally appeared hung on through the increasing

Rubbing snow on frozen ears, New Yorkers performed neighborly rite now known to be wrong thing to do.

Certain impatient city dwellers torched way through the snow; the result was flooding and hazardous ice.

blizzard. Men and boys earned anywhere from $2 to $10 a day shoveling people out. But they could not keep ahead of the snow. One of the few regular merchants to enjoy any real prosperity that Monday was John Meisinger, who became an overnight hero by unloading his entire stock of snow shovels at $1 apiece—for a neat 150 percent profit.

Back at the weather station, atop a slim iron pipe 175 feet above Nassau Street, Farmer Dunn's anemometer stopped recording, its propeller jammed with ice. Whipped by an astonishing wind full of driven snow, an assistant, Francis Long, "climbed that slim pole without any support," Dunn recalled, "adjusted the instrument and replaced some wiring with one hand."

Wires were down all over town; the streets looked like a battlefield. Broken signs, trash can lids, hats and roof shingles skittered along sidewalks already cluttered with shards of glass from blown-down streetlamps and windowpanes. "Great trucks piled with carcasses from the slaughter-houses, broken down hacks, delivery wagons and overturned milk carts," reported the New York *World*, "found place in this mournful display."

One elevated train on the Sixth Avenue line took six and a half hours to cover two blocks north of 14th Street, then stalled completely, leaving passengers to climb down to the ground on ladders set up by gypsy entrepreneurs who charged $1 a head for the service. With public transportation effectively knocked out, a few hardy hack drivers braved the blizzard, demand-

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With Manhattan isolated on the second day of the snowstorm, some 3,000 foolhardy New Yorkers crossed to and from Brooklyn when thick ice floes temporarily lodged together in the East River.

ing as much as $40 a ride from stranded business people. Downtown at 2 Wall Street, doughty Roscoe Conkling, 58, an ex-senator, notorious ladies' man and current state leader of the Republican Party, would have none of such expensive indulgences. An early-day fitness addict, who did not drink or smoke and included boxing in his regular exercise routine, Conkling set out afoot for his club on 25th Street above Union Square, two and a half miles away.

South of 24th Street, along the whole length of Broadway, the electric streetlights were out. A single lamp glowed at the corner of 14th Street. Every one of the town's newfangled electric clocks had quit, too, at exactly 12:07 P.M., when the power failed. Of his self-imposed ordeal in the storm's blackness, Conkling later related, "It was useless to try to pick out a path, so I went magnificently along shouldering drifts." He took nearly half an hour to battle through the final steps to the New York Club, then collapsed, so chilled and exhausted that he fell ill, still another victim of one of the coldest March days ever recorded in New York.

Amazingly, among suburban New York's 10,000 commuters, not a single fatality occurred that day. Three hundred sheltered through the night of the 12th on benches in Grand Central Station. Downtown about a thousand others besieged the Astor House hotel, where the manager set up cots and even rented chairs and corridor corners to a couple hundred refugees. About 700 others were turned away.

Those who risked a ride on the last trains out, in some cases endured the most drawn-out commute of their lives. At Mount Vernon, just beyond the city limits on the Central line, more than three dozen trains came to a halt, stranding more than 4,000 passengers. Stephen Van Tassel, Mount Vernon's enterprising 23-year-old ticket agent, rounded up male volunteers who helped him lead the few women passengers to nearby homes. Then, as many of the men as could fit crowded into the depot, where two coal stoves kept the place warm. Once more, fortune favored the cold. A local restaurateur had laid in a $4,000 overstock of food—an investment that had pushed him to the edge of bankruptcy. Within a matter of hours he had cleaned out his cupboards, peddling sandwiches at up to $4 apiece (at a time when lunch could be bought for a nickel) and profiting so handsomely that he was able to withdraw the bankruptcy petition he had filed before the storm broke.

Though most of the lasting tales from the March storm involve New York and its environs, a metropolitan complex that to this day is still unshakably fascinated by itself, the severest weather hit elsewhere. New Haven recorded an all-time record snowfall of 44.7 inches, more than twice as much as Manhattan. Four-foot falls were common all over New England. In Hartford, Mrs. M. Brusselars was trapped in her house for three days with a dozen refugees. Food ran out but, she reported, "we found that under my back porch about 75 to 100 sparrows had gathered, so we killed some of them, made a few sparrow pies, which helped to sustain us."

The highest drift of all piled up at Gravesend on the southwest tip of Long Island: 52 feet from base to summit. The lowest barometric pressure reading (28.92) was registered at New Bedford, Massachusetts. On nearby Block Island, terrible winds gusted for

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Near Wall Street, when the storm eased up, the warp and woof of snow-trimmed wires festooned the sky.

hours on end; to the southwest, the unrelenting wind and churning coastal waters wrecked some 200 vessels.

Like the backcountry of the West, these waters in 1888 could be lonely and dangerous even during good weather. Records were sparse among the fishing smacks, oystermen, lumber schooners and other coastwise traders and tramp vessels that shared the sailing grounds with world-ranging freighters and elegant passenger liners. Thus there will never be an exact tally of how many desperate, ice-coated mariners went overboard or down with their ships.

Meanwhile, back in Manhattan, New Yorkers were finding more of their own rare adventures. For the first and last time in memory, the island was effectively cut off from the rest of the world. The last lifeline out had been the Brooklyn Bridge; the trolley across it had stopped running, and police blocked pedestrians on Monday evening for fear it would collapse or that someone might be blown off. By an impossible coincidence, huge ice floes off the Battery were swept up the East River on the tide and jammed ashore just below the bridge. A few brave souls, desperate to get home or to work, no matter what, ventured out onto the ice. Three thousand commuters scurried across on the mosaic of frozen slabs, to be helped up the rocky banks by longshoremen—who charged from a dime to a dollar for "lending" helping hands.

The police opened jails as shelters so that stranded citizens could sleep on cell cots. Mercifully, only one serious fire broke out—in a paper-box factory at St. John's Lane and Laight Street. After the firemen got the fireplug working, water put out the flames, but also drenched and instantly froze on the firefighters. "As the men came down from the roof their clothes were solid ice," a witness recalled. "We weighed their hats at 20 pounds apiece." Neighbors tried to "give them hot coffee, but found it hard to thaw out the mustaches of those who had them."

Broadway strove gamely to hold onto its greatest tradition, but only three shows went on. Frank J. Pfister, who had made it in from Beechhurst, Long Island, to work at his book bindery, headed to Pastor's on 14th Street. The audience consisted of just four people. At showtime, Pastor came to the footlights and announced that only a few performers and musicians had come in. "He said if we wished we could go to the box office and get a refund," reminisced Pfister years later. "I called down to go on with the show. All the performers responded to the applause just the same as if the house were crowded." Afterward, Pastor treated the four customers and the gallant cast to sandwiches and champagne.

Tuesday afternoon brought moderating weather. By Wednesday morning the thermometers in New York had climbed way up to 20, and that afternoon the sun burst out. Farmer Dunn's anemometer whirred happily in the spring breeze while cities, towns, villages and railroads started to dig out. One happy discovery was a hale and hearty Mr. Theodorus Van Wyck of Mount Vernon, who had vanished in the gale, amid reports he had perished in a snowdrift. Wednesday's newspapers reported his demise in the obituaries, which Mr. Van Wyck had the pleasure of chortling over.

One way or another, however, the blizzard wrote the final word on about 400 souls, the most celebrated being New York's former senator Roscoe Conkling. On April 18 he succumbed, barely a month after receiving a telegram from admirers who thought he had survived his trek up Broadway in fine shape: "All join . . . in congratulations to you and say: 'Come to the banana belt where every man is your well-wisher.'"

It was from the office of the editor of the Fargo *Argus*, in Dakota Territory.

Afterward, with drifted and shoveled snow as high as 52 feet, the city became a magic realm for children.

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LOOK AT THE TINY CHRISTMAS ALBUM
JUST LIKE MINE

At Barbara Mandrell Country, stuffed "Bearbara" given to singer after 1984 auto mishap hangs on wall.

An intrigued visitor examines impressions on the Sidewalk of the Stars at Music Valley Wax Museum.

By David Gates

Nashville's shrines: memories, stars and famous guitars

Devoted fans visit the capital of country music to enjoy the homes and the mementos of performers who seem to be just like neighbors

Opened six years ago, the museum is just one of many star exhibits that lure millions of tourists each year.

Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum displays ornamental leather guitar case given by Willie Nelson.

Last time I went to Nashville, I was surprised to stumble onto a new restaurant called Reba McEntire's Kitchen. Though not all that surprised. For several years I'd been watching Reba jockey herself out of relative obscurity to become the new queen of country music. I walked in and saw, behind a glass wall, a bunch of her album covers, the electric-blue dress she'd worn to the 1986 Grammy awards, a guitar given to her by a fan, and pictures of her ranch in Stringtown, Oklahoma. And I thought: *Yep.*

This display is modest by Nashville standards. But Reba has enough of a following now to build herself a full-scale shrine. There are at least a dozen such places around Nashville: museums devoted to the lives and careers of country-music stars from Kitty Wells to Barbara Mandrell, Johnny Cash to Conway Twitty. And this isn't even counting gift shops, cars-of-the-stars exhibits, wax museums or, the holy of holies, the Ryman Auditorium, home of the Grand Ole Opry in its greatest years. Other cities—New Orleans, Chicago, New York—are as important in the history of American music as Nashville, but none is as obsessed. No tour groups are herded through Harlem's Apollo Theatre past the spot where Duke Ellington conducted from his piano bench and the Temptations capered in formation. And what jazzman would open

Photographs by Harry Benson

a museum to display his baby shoes, his first instrument and a replica of his bedroom? Only in Nashville is tourism based on the implicit promise that visitors will get to *know* its musicians, and only country-music stars feel obliged to honor that promise.

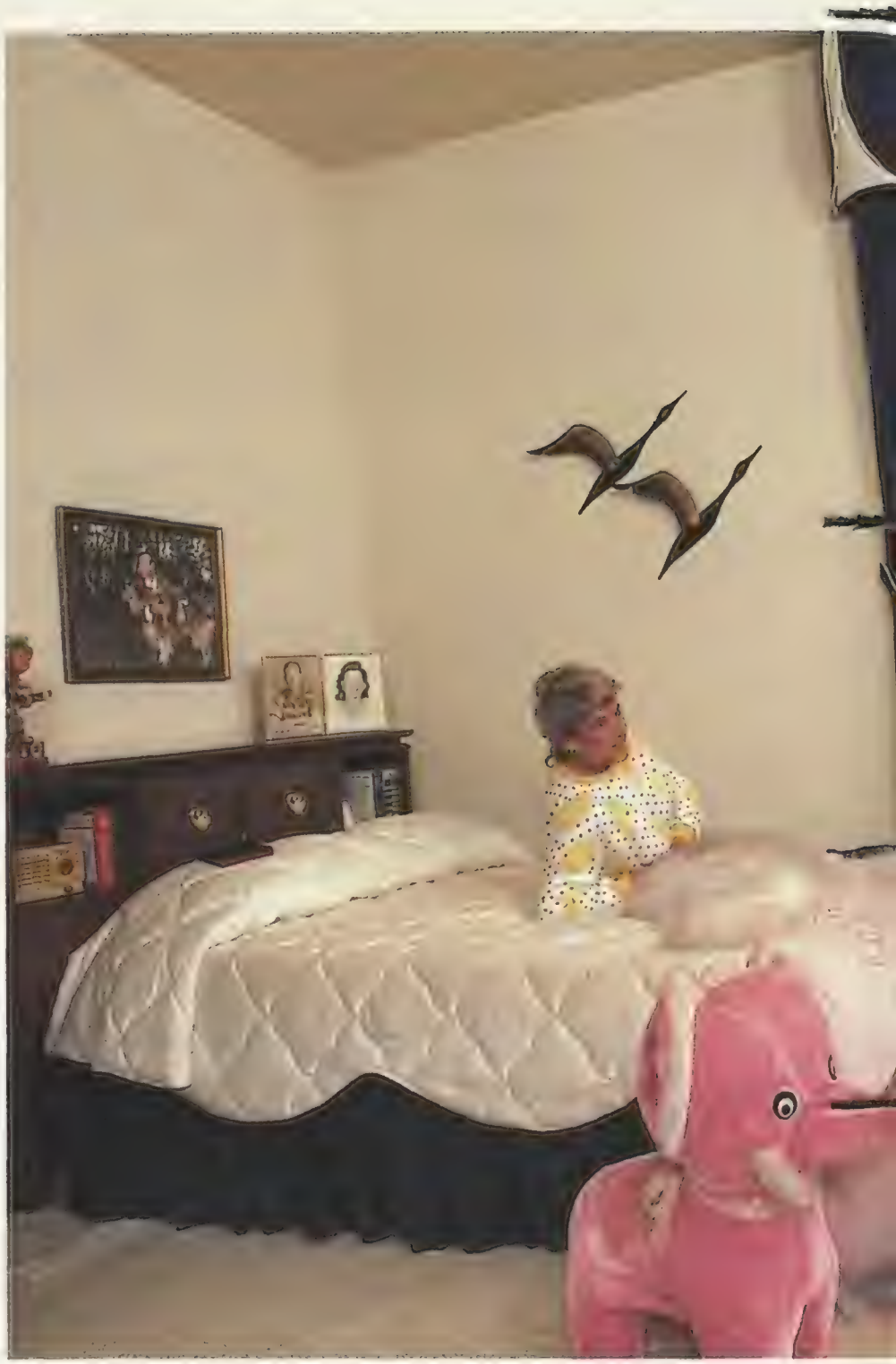
"It's a form of sophisticated customer service," Bill Ivey told me when I stopped by his office. Ivey, a folklorist by training, is director of the Country Music Foundation, which runs the scholarly, yet unstuffy, Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. "They feel the public needs that intimate contact with their private lives. It comes with that notion that's always been in country music, that we're just friends and neighbors, that we're just like you. And in some cases, it's still literally true." Older performers especially, some of whom started out entertaining at picnics and house parties, can persuade themselves that traveling in $200,000 custom-built buses from one arena to the next is merely a way of reaching a whole lot more friends and neighbors. And the fans can believe it, too. Sort of. In Barbara Mandrell Country, the snazziest personality museum in town, I overheard a couple of them examining the giant autograph book that visitors are encouraged to sign. "Look at this," one said to the other, "somebody wrote her a whole letter here. You know, she reads all this. . . . *Somebody* does."

The chance to touch a star

Those polyester pilgrims, so easy to ridicule, come to Nashville to tread sacred ground, to gaze on sacred objects and maybe (dare they hope?) to meet sacred people. Why, after all, would anybody care whether or not Barbara Mandrell was a friend and neighbor if she weren't also a figure through whom they hoped to touch something transcendent?

For my own get-acquainted bus trip, I choose Stardust Tours over a dozen other outfits in Nashville's yellow pages: the name implies that something could rub off on you. Our driver, a bearded young man named Casey, first does the obligatory drive-through of downtown, enlivened only by his waggish suggestion that the Nashville Electric Service building, with its prominent dome, is the "Dolly Parton Memorial." Then we head down I-65 for star country.

Dolly's, in fact, is the first house we pass: red roof, white columns, a tiny chapel where she and her husband renewed their marriage vows. Then it's over to T.G. Sheppard's (which turns out to have a "For Sale" sign out front); then past the house where Marty Robbins' widow still lives; past the Lord's Chapel Christian Academy, where Jeannie C. Riley and Jessi Colter (Mrs. Waylon Jennings) go to church; and past Waylon and Jessi's house, hidden behind trees and fences. Then the patch of woods off Franklin Road



Mary Reeves greets visitors in museum dedicated to Jim Reeves, the singer who died in a 1964 plane crash.

Minnie Pearl obligingly signs an autograph for a smiling admirer backstage at the Grand Ole Opry.

The room is a replica of one the couple shared. Her pink negligee is laid out on bed next to his black robe.

Dee Presley, Elvis' stepmother, is a hostess in wax museum where she talks with guests about "the King."

where Jim Reeves' plane went down in 1964, not very far from Porter Wagoner's residence, which is right across from . . .

Hank Williams' house! Or where Hank Williams' house used to be, before it was moved up to Music Row (the one occupying the lot now was built by his widow, Miss Audrey). Then it's on to South Curtiswood Lane, where we pass the home of the owner of Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, the Governor's Mansion and, *right next door,* Minnie Pearl's house. Around the corner is Webb Pierce's place, with its guitar-shaped swimming pool. Time was, says Casey, Webb would come out and sell water from the pool for five dollars a cup.

On the way back to town, Casey chivies us into singing "You Are My Sunshine." Now, he says, we can tell the folks back home that we were asked to sing in Nashville—and that we were invited back. Cute idea.

Hear that lonesome whistle blow

The bus drops us off near Music Row, where record companies and music publishers have their studios and offices, and where a day's worth of shrines is within easy walking distance. In the lobby of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, I can hear a scratchy old recording of Uncle Dave Macon, the first big star of the Grand Ole Opry, singing "Tell Her to Come Back Home." Inside, they've got one of Uncle Dave's banjos; a fiddle that belonged to Uncle Jimmy Thompson, who played on the very first Opry broadcast in 1925, and a duplicate of that lonesome boat whistle blown by the Solemn Old Judge, George D. Hay, to begin and end every show.

Some of these artifacts are Important. Here's the Martin D-18 played by Elvis Presley during the Sun Records sessions that began his career. There's what may have been the first electrified steel guitar (it looks as if it had been hewn out of a two-by-six), handmade by the pioneering steel player Bob Dunn. That 1939 Rickenbacker Electro is the steel guitar Jerry Byrd made weep in Hank Williams' "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry."

The fans seem to take all this momentousness in stride. Some lumber along in what appears to be a chronic state of suspicion, as if they're convinced they are being cheated but haven't yet figured out how. Cheerier souls regale one another with running commentaries. "There's Reba's boots. She got big feet." "Huh. There's Patsy Cline's cigarette lighter, where she died in that car crash." Plane crash, *plane* crash. "That girl there," says an elderly woman, pointing (as if to a distant cousin at a family reunion) to a costume donated by singer Sharon White, "she's married to Ricky Scaggs." And she is, too. Most fans know their

stuff. In the Willie Nelson exhibit, a woman jerks a thumb at a placard and triumphantly tells her friend, "Sixty-three." True, Willie looks a bit weathered, but—I go over and look. "Willie and Martha parted ways in 1963," the placard reads, "and soon afterward Willie married his singing partner, Shirley Collie."

But how, I wondered, would a country singer, unencumbered by a degree in folklore, fill a whole museum devoted just to himself? Waylon's Private Collection, the shrine of outlaw-turned-curator Waylon Jennings, suggests a typical answer: clean out your attic. In addition to his awards and family pictures, Waylon has laid out a higgledy-piggledy assortment of the kinds of things you're apt to amass if you're a country star. The Colt .45 used by Alan Ladd in *Shane*. A General Lee (i.e., a '59 Dodge Charger with a Confederate flag on the roof) from *The Dukes of Hazzard*. And this art object: a large knife, whose handle is a guitar peg head, with "Jack Daniel's" lettered where it might ordinarily say "Gibson" or "Martin." It is as pure an expression of the country outlaw sensibility as you're likely to find.

Not far from Waylon, Hank Williams jr. has His Family Tradition museum. (The allusion is to a popular song of his in which he maintains that drinkin' and singin' run in the family.) Hank sr.'s powder-blue '52 Cadillac convertible is here, meticulously restored. So is his collection of hand-painted ties—a guitar, a buckaroo, a harlot under a streetlamp—and his shaving kit, with a much-squeezed tube of Pepsodent. Hank jr.'s side of the museum has one of the tiny cowboy suits he wore as a kid while singing his late father's songs. A liquor cabinet with bottles of Jim Beam and Jacques Bonet American Cold Duck. A decanter that plays "Family Tradition."

A less daunting place is Minnie Pearl's Museum, a yellow Victorian house whose doormat reads "How-*dee*!" Dolls in glass cases "reenact" key moments in Minnie's career; a model of Grinder's Switch, a prototype Lake Wobegon, shows just where Uncle Nabob's house and Man Mountain Murdock's blacksmith shop are situated. And photographs galore: Minnie with Sammy Davis jr. ("a city feller") and with Pee-wee Herman ("a thoroughly nice young man"). But my warm feelings about Minnie are severely tested at the Country Music Wax Museum. I'm having trouble figuring out which celebrities some of these effigies really look like. There's Bob Wills who resembles a fat Richard Nixon, a Jimmie Rodgers who is a dead ringer for the Wolf Man, and, at a piano, a Michael Jackson-like Ronnie Milsap. The nightmare mood is enhanced by Minnie's voice saying "How-*dee*!" on a tape loop about every ten seconds.

Walking into Barbara Mandrell Country after this is like turning on *Good Morning America* after a night of *Twilight Zone* reruns laced with commercials for loan sharks and chiropractors. "You're family and we love you very much," she coos on the video that greets visitors. "I want this to be a very personal time for you." And, "because I'm a fan of yours," she urges folks to sign the autograph book. It's all painstakingly calculated: when her video image finally says "Come on in," it even beckons in the right direction.

Barbara's fans sometimes regard her simply as an old chum who's come up in the world. "Hi Barbara!" reads one note in the autograph book. "I can't believe I'm here. I'm so impressed." Yet there is another Barbara, a Barbara celestially distant, to whose shrine a pilgrimage is the fulfillment of a lifelong hope. "Watch you every chance I get, but never thought I'd get here. Thanks." Or, more poignantly, "Our dream has finally come true."

There are acres of Mandrelliana here. Jewelry given to her by Elvis Presley. A clay pigeon she missed while shooting with Roy Rogers. A display commemorating her near-fatal 1984 car crash, including a bent ignition key and a crutch that's actually a playable steel guitar. But all of this is exhausting. I'm pie-eyed by the time I get to the exit, which, as in all Nashville museums, leads through the gift shop.

My last stop in the Music Row neighborhood is the Hank Williams house, which they've plunked down on the corner of 17th and Division. It's a brick rambler whose shutters and railings are gussied up with G clefs and quarter notes. The door is locked; I look through the picture window and see that the whole place is empty except for a big blowup of Hank with his guitar. Broken panes of glass are stacked against a wall

David Gates, who is a staff writer for Newsweek, *is also a longtime country-music lover. He plays guitar and banjo in a string band called Lazy Aces.*

Fame may wax and wane, but here the stars always shine

Loretta Lynn's likeness at wax museum wears dress popular coal miner's daughter often wore on tour.

Singer Merle Haggard in familiar Western regalia is posed, appropriately enough, next to covered wagon.

"Gentleman Jim" Reeves was a crooner with a full, rich voice.

A 1977 album cover inspired the wax version of Dolly Parton.

Waylon Jennings (left) and Willie Nelson: pals and fellow "outlaws."

Multitalented Marty Robbins was also a composer and an actor—perhaps the Opry's best showman.

"The Man in Black," the venerable Johnny Cash, has been singing songs about trains for three decades.

Copies of Minnie Pearl's straw hat and ruffled apron await purchase by visitors at the museum gift shop.

and the paint is peeling. Spray-painted on the west end of the house is a round cartoon face that could either be a bent-eared cat or a fat-horned devil. Next to it are the words "NOT DEAD YET."

Nashville shrines tend to cluster around Music Row, out by Opryland USA, or up in Hendersonville at the Twitty City/Music Village USA complex. But the Jim Reeves Museum is off by its lonesome, at the corner of Gallatin Road South and Briley Parkway. Here, Mary Reeves, Jim's widow, greets the faithful herself. "When they come here," she tells me, "they are Jim Reeves fans."

And sure enough, in bounds a couple from Kingsport, Tennessee, pronouncing Jim Reeves their "favorite singer of all singers of all time"—and you could about knock them over with a feather when they find out who they're talking to. "That's right," says Mary, as she must have said ten thousand times, "and we were married for 17 years. We did not live in this house, and I still live in the same house we built in 1958. I'm remarried now, to a man named. . . ." Mary Reeves gives the faithful their money's worth. There's a reproduction of the bedroom she and Jim shared, with her pink negligee laid out on the double bed next to his robe. And a diorama of the plane crash: a backdrop of sylvan wallpaper, a model Cessna on a Plexiglas stand and, on the bark-strewn floor of the display case, a wallet with a ten-dollar bill sticking out. Jim's bus is parked outside the museum, and as I peer through one of its windows, I see his sanctum: a bed, and a shelf holding a bottle of vitamin C tablets, half a bottle of cough syrup, a can of Esquire black boot polish (29 cents) and a tube of Gleem. Should I really be looking at this? Then again, that's what the wooden walkway alongside the bus is for, right?

The place where Conway lives

Up in Hendersonville, they see places like the Jim Reeves Museum as throwbacks. Twitty City/Music Village USA aspires to be, as its general manager, Dan Stupka, puts it, "the Epcot of country music." Music Village has three museums so far: Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Hall of Fame, the Marty Robbins Memorial Showcase, and the Ferlin Husky Wings of a Dove Museum. (This last, named after Husky's inspirational 1960 hit, is a roomful of Nativity-to-Resurrection paintings and dioramas.) Twitty City is not a mere shrine but the place where Conway Twitty and his family actually live. "The number-one thing people want to see when they come to Nashville," says Stupka, "is a country-music star. That's one thing Twitty City can provide 'em with. Conway's a different kind of guy. It takes a different kind of guy to live in a situation like this."

To hear Conway tell it, it's a piece of cake. "My office is about a hundred yards from the house," he explains when I catch up with him during a break in a recording session, "and I can get there without ever running into anybody if I want to. Or I can walk right out the front door and visit with 60 or 70 people from Canada or Japan. Got it either way." Somehow this seems beside the point. Is this or is this not a weird way to live? It's a question Conway is used to. "The fans know that they actually are invited to your home. And they really appreciate it. All you've got to do is get a little order to it. Country-music fans are not going to violate those things once you let 'em know where you want 'em to go and what you want 'em to do. They're nice people. They're going to appreciate the fact that you've got a super grounds crew and they're going to stay right on the sidewalk and enjoy everything you've done for 'em."

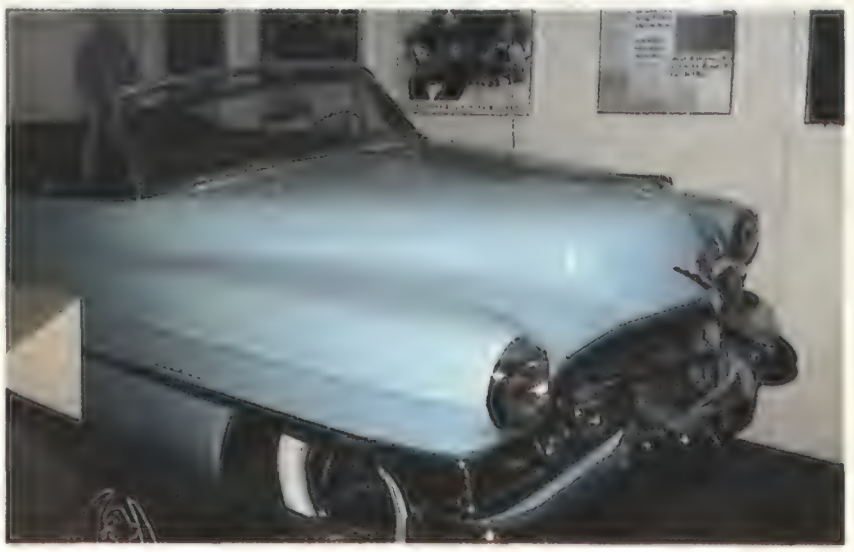
Touring a high-tech fun house

The tour of Twitty City begins with an exhibit called Conway's Showcase, an elaborate riposte to the conventional star museum. It is nearly artifact-free and works something like a high-tech fun house. Computerized curtains open and close as you walk through a series of darkened chambers, which suddenly blaze up in multimedia displays, narrated by a disembodied voice. There are dioramas of childhood scenes, snatches of recorded songs, slides of old photographs, video clips of Conway performing, a model of his touring bus and, finally, the wall of gold, on which trick lighting makes Conway's gold records appear to spin counterclockwise as you hear "Hello, Darlin'" fading into "Linda on My Mind" fading into "You've Never Been This Far Before" fading into. . . .

The only escape from Conway's Showcase is through the grounds, through which we're led by a teenage guide. "The windows on the right," she says in cadences that go on and on without pause, "is Conway's personal office and many times when Conway is in his office he will raise the window and greet his fans." Alas, not today. "Okay the white bungalow is where Conway's mother lives," says our guide. "Now the yellow home on the right is Conway's oldest daughter Joni's home and next to Joni is the beige home. This is his youngest son Jimmy's home. Now Jimmy today is seeking a professional golfing career . . . and now if you'll follow me we're going to go take a closer look at Conway's home."

It turns out to be the anticipated dilly—24 rooms, columned portico, the works. "Now this does conclude the tour," says our guide, "but you are welcome to stay out here as long as you like." It's nice here, all right: grass trimmed to golf-green specifications, Conway

Stately Evergreen Place, built in 1794, is home of the Jim Reeves Museum, but singer never lived there.



The Hank Williams jr. Museum displays 1952 Cadillac convertible in which Hank sr. traveled to concerts.

It is an honor to appear in the wax museum, but Barbara Mandrell loses face when her head is removed.

At the Grand Ole Opry, home of the greatest stars in country music, fans snap pictures of their favorites.

Twitty songs playing, perpetually, from speakers mounted in the trees. But most of us don't overstay our welcome. Besides, there's no place to sit down.

Saturday night is Grand Ole Opry night, and inside the Opry House at the Opryland USA complex a publicist turns me loose backstage. Here, the stars themselves are the artifacts. Minnie Pearl? Over there—hat with the price tag. Roy Acuff? That's him. Looks a little scary, doesn't he? But you can go right up and say hello. Isn't that Ferlin Husky—the guy who looks like Marcello Mastroianni, in the white suit and frilled shirt?

Most of these legendary figures haven't had a hit record for years. Once, the Opry was the summit of country music and stars like Hank Williams could play here for union scale on Saturday night, then hit the road and be assured of a week of sellout houses. Today, the Opry still pays union scale and requires regulars to perform a certain number of times each year. Although there remains a strong sense of tradition, many superstars cannot afford it. Some veteran performers worry that when Acuff, the 84-year-old king of country music, passes on, Opryland's management could start looking for sexier attractions.

And, spiffy as the new Opry House may be, a lot of the regulars still miss the old Ryman Auditorium, home of the Opry from 1943-74, and the vanishing style of music and way of life for which it was the grand symbol. "That building had a soul," says 60-year-old Opry member Charlie Louvin, sitting in one of the new Opry House's 14 clean, commodious dressing rooms. "The building here—I recognize this is a nice building. Most of us are proud of it. But you come in behind an eight-foot-high fence, you have your own parking place. At the old Ryman, the fans knew there were just two ways to get out of that building. So they'd stand back there in the alley, and they could catch you. There isn't the camaraderie among the performers, either, that there was when everybody had to use that same dressing room."

Fans who remember the Ryman also tend to look back to a sort of roughneck golden age. When the Opry lets out, I head on over to where the In crowd goes: the Midnight Jamboree, at Ernest Tubb Record Shop No. 2 across the street on Music Valley Drive. There I meet Lloyd and Inez Hazen of Pontiac, Michigan, who've been coming to the Opry since the '50s. Yeah, Lloyd allows, the old Ryman could get pretty hot in the summer. "You were always wantin' to walk up and get a Royal Crown Cola. You know, 'Best by taste test'?" He laughs. Those were the days when you really could believe that Hank and Ernest and Patsy and you were all friends and neighbors.

"And Marty Robbins," adds Lloyd. "We had a good musician there. A real fine musician. And he seemed like he just loved the people. They'd bring him on last, near midnight. And he'd say, 'Well, I don't care if we stay here 'til morning.' And then he'd come out there in the lobby . . ."

"With his pot of coffee," Inez remembers.

"With his pot of coffee . . ."

"And sign autographs," says Inez.

"And sign autographs," says Lloyd. "Oh, Marty was a terrific performer. What a great person. You know, there's a certain communication between people in the audience and country singers. Because the performers love what they're doin' and the people love the way they're singin' them songs. And they sing it from the heart, you know."

Music for the working man

The very best thing about country music, Lloyd says, "is that it tells a story about life. And people's loves and their hates and their. . . ." He shakes his head and tries again. "It tells a story of the people of the world who do the work of the world. That's what George D. Hay said. And that just about wraps it up, I think." Meaning, I figured, "That says it in a nutshell" or, possibly, "I'd like to get to bed now."

The Ryman Auditorium is on Nashville's Fifth Avenue, just above lower Broadway, the city's modest sin district: a couple of blocks of bars, pawnshops and peep shows. The original Ernest Tubb Record Shop is still here, with its guitar-shaped neon sign. And Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, whose back door was across the alley from the back door of the Ryman; and the Alamo, a Western-wear store. Opryland plans to de-

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velop this area soon, making a restored (though mostly idle) Ryman the gleaming centerpiece of a new mall. Nice for families.

The tour guide begins her presentation by asking us what kind of building the Ryman looks like. Well, those pointy windows are a dead giveaway. We all say, "A church!" and she starts telling how Capt. Tom Ryman, a scoffer converted by a sermon about a mother's love for her wayward son, began building this place as the Union Gospel Tabernacle in 1889. After his death . . . but my attention is wandering.

It's a mess in here: crumbling plaster, peeling paint, filthy stage curtains. Still, even in its decline the Ryman must have been an ideal place for audience and performers alike. The main floor is a gently sloping semicircle of wooden pews (surprisingly comfortable), and even in the balcony the sight lines are excellent. I drift away from the tour group and walk to center stage. Standing at a disconnected microphone, I look out into the auditorium. If it were full, I would be able to see every face.

On the very spot where I am standing, I recall—and it really does give me a chill—*they* once stood: Uncle Dave Macon, Patsy Cline, Jim Reeves, Marty Robbins, Ernest Tubb. On this spot, they were most alive. Now, all of the artifacts assembled in all of the shrines in Nashville cannot recapture that intensity. Some country singers may indeed have been conduits of the sacred—just listen again to those old Hank Williams records—but only for as long as they were out here in the spotlight. If in any sense at all they still seem like neighbors, it is as neighbors who moved away a long time ago.

The tour guide is nearing the end of her spiel, the part where she proposes we sing a song together, a song we all know. At that moment, mindful of the sacred, and forgetting my common sense, I seriously expect a solemn country hymn—"The Old Rugged Cross," maybe, or "Amazing Grace." It is, of course, "You Are My Sunshine."

We are being asked to sing in Nashville, and invited to come back.

"Bashful Brother Oswald" strides to the Opry stage with banjo and dobro guitar as he has done every week for 50 years. Now 76, Pete Kirby (his real name) began at Opry as a comedian-musician with Roy Acuff.

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Article and photographs by Vic Banks

The red wolf gets a second chance to live by its wits

Wildlife biologists are trying to restore one of our most imperiled predators by seeding a Carolina refuge with pairs bred in captivity

On a cool, quiet evening last fall, Mike Phillips, who is a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, stopped his four-wheel-drive truck on a narrow logging road in the brushy woods of eastern North Carolina and shut off the engine. We got out and started hiking up the road. Suspended above the pine trees, a brilliant half-moon lit our way. We had gone only a short distance when the beam of Phillips' flashlight illuminated a trail of large pad prints in the moist sand. "They've been here, all right," he said.

The "they" Phillips was referring to were red wolves. A few weeks earlier, eight of them—seven from a captive-breeding facility outside of Tacoma, Washington, one from a sanctuary in Missouri—had been released in the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. A 130,000-acre tangle of snake- and tick-infested swamp forest and marshland, the refuge occupies a peninsula bounded by saltwater and the Alligator River. Lush, secluded, hauntingly beautiful, it is located just across the sound from touristy Nags Head and the Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

The introduction of those animals to that place was no routine experiment. The red wolf is one of the most beleaguered large mammals in the United States. Its purchase on survival is more precarious by far than that of the grizzly bear, the Florida panther or the manatee. A lanky cousin of the smaller coyote and the more statuesque gray (or timber) wolf, the red wolf was extirpated throughout most of its once considerable range by the early part of this century. During the past 20 years, federal officials have been working on a complicated plan to reverse that process. The tracks Phillips and I found on the Carolina logging road proved that red wolves were indeed on the comeback trail. Now, however, the question is whether they can stay on it long enough to establish healthy, self-sustaining populations. If they do, it will mark the first time a captive-bred North American mammal that had become extinct in the wild has been successfully returned to its home.

Giving several pairs of red wolves a chance to live normal lives may not seem like much, but in the risky world of endangered species any progress, no matter how small, is counted a breakthrough. As it happens, people who admire wolves have had a number of breakthroughs to celebrate lately. Although gray wolves remain conspicuous mainly by their absence in the lower 48, there are some tantalizing signs that they, too, may be returning.

The only sizable gray wolf population south of Canada and Alaska continues to roam the forest-and-lake country of northern Minnesota. There, after years of controversy (SMITHSONIAN, January 1985), public opinion now seems to be running strongly in the wolf's favor. David Mech, a biologist with the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), attributes the turnabout in part to good behavior. Notwithstanding the fears of area farmers, Mech says, wolves seldom venture out of the woods to attack livestock.

Compared with Minnesota's 1,200 gray wolves, populations elsewhere may seem paltry, but the important thing is that the species is showing up in places where

A healthy young red wolf picks its way through the dense woods in an enclosure at sanctuary in Missouri.

Curtis J. Carley

Photograph taken in late 1800s shows hunters proudly displaying carcasses of red wolves killed in Texas. Original picture hangs on the wall of a restaurant in central part of state. Predator-control efforts over the past century all but eliminated wolves in the wild.

it hasn't been seen for a long time. Biologists are keeping an eye on about 20 of the animals in northern Wisconsin. Roughly the same number are holding out in upper Michigan and on Isle Royale in Lake Superior. Sightings have been documented as far west as Idaho. But the most dramatic reappearance is occurring in the northern Rocky Mountains.

About a dozen gray wolves from Canada took up residence in Glacier National Park a few years ago. Today three and possibly four different packs are denning there. Other wolves have been spotted east of Glacier. The FWS recently drew up a proposal to reestablish wolves in Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. William Penn Mott jr., the director of the National Park Service, supports it, stockmen oppose it, and Congress will likely grapple with the issue later this year. When it does, it will have to reckon with the wolf's compelling new image. Not only in Minnesota but in other parts of the country as well, the animal is no longer reviled as a wanton killer but revered as a thrilling symbol of the wild.

Whereas gray wolves have managed thus far to edge back largely on their own, thanks to a robust reservoir of the creatures across the border in Canada, red wolves are too far gone for that. Only 92 genetically pure individuals are known to exist and all of them (except for the ones at large in North Carolina) are being held in captivity. It's a tragic comedown for a stealthy, nocturnal predator that once ranged across the entire Southeastern part of the country, from the Gulf Coast to southern Illinois into Georgia.

Specialists in taxonomy have had a hard time deciding what, exactly, the red wolf is—a species, a subspecies of the gray wolf or a hybrid of the gray wolf and the coyote. In the 1970s, Ronald Nowak, a zoologist with the FWS, studied skulls from these animals and found significant differences. He concluded that each is, therefore, a distinct species. Nowak believes red wolves probably came from a canid that evolved entirely in North America. About a million years ago, he theorizes, some of those wolflike animals crossed over the Bering land bridge into Eurasia, later to return as gray wolves which then proceeded to back red wolves into what is now regarded as their historical range.

When pioneers moved into the Southeast, they launched an all-out war on red wolves, which were known to prey occasionally on livestock. The species was shot, trapped and poisoned out of existence in many areas, and much of its habitat was rendered unsuitable by agricultural development and deforestation. Between 1932 and 1964, state and federal predator-control specialists destroyed 50,000 wild canids, including a large number of red wolves. The decimation and displacement helped undermine the social structure of the survivors and they began to interbreed with coyotes. "They were simply mating themselves into oblivion," says John Patton, an ecological geneticist at Washington University in St. Louis.

Vic Banks produces films on science and natural history subjects. He is currently at work on a book about the Pantanal wilderness in Brazil.

In the early 1970s, the FWS initiated a red wolf recovery program under the direction of biologist Curtis Carley. The animals were then barely managing to hold out in patches of marshland and coastal prairie in Texas and Louisiana. "By the time our project got under way," Carley recalls, "we realized it was going to be difficult to even identify a pure red wolf."

Carley and his associates knew it was just a matter of time before hybridization with coyotes resulted in the disappearance of red wolves in the wild. The only way to save the species from genetic extinction was to set up a captive-breeding program—a holding action that would culminate in a reintroduction attempt once biological survival had been assured.

Over a period of several years, Carley's people captured nearly 400 canids in and around Beaumont, Texas. Most of them were found to be coyotes or hybrids; only 40 were considered pure enough to keep for breeding. Those wolves were first sent to the Point Defiance Zoo in Tacoma, Washington, and subsequently transferred to a contract breeding facility nearby. About a third of their pups survived and were certified as pure red wolves.

"At that point, all of our genetic eggs were in one basket," Carley says. "To minimize the likelihood of a biological catastrophe—the loss of breeding stock to an epidemic, for example—some of the Point Defiance animals were sent to facilities in other parts of the country." Today, red wolves are being bred at five zoos in New York, Texas, Louisiana and Washington, and at the Wild Canid Survival and Research Center (also known as the Wolf Sanctuary) in Eureka, Missouri.

Last year I visited the sanctuary, which was established by the late Marlin Perkins and his wife, Carol. It is located at Washington University's Tyson Research Facility, a former federal munitions dump containing 2,000 acres of wild Ozark habitat. Rare canids raised there, in addition to red wolves, include Iranian wolves and gray wolves from Mexico and North America. Bill Malloy, then director of the center, showed me around and told me that wolves normally breed very well in captivity. That spring, however, the sanctuary's ten red wolves had produced only two pups, both of which died, apparently of a virus, a short time after whelping.

Sneaking up on the wolves

Malloy took me into one 2.5-acre enclosure where six red wolves lived on the side of a wooded hill. Due to their shy nature and the dense undergrowth, the animals were hard to see. We tried to sneak up on them but they skittered away, running silently with their thick, bushy tails held out.

Despite their name, red wolves range in color from

Leonard Lee Rue III

Typical coyote looks like a red wolf but is not as large. The coyote has defied attempts to wipe it out.

Stouffer Productions

The red wolf can be brown, black or gray. It is in trouble because of hybridization and human pressures.

Stouffer Productions

The gray wolf, biggest of the three canine cousins, has started to reappear in parts of its former range.

tawny to black. They generally weigh between 40 and 80 pounds (gray wolves range from 60 to 150 pounds). They may at times appear scruffy and at other times sleek, an aspect that is enhanced by their spindly legs. Little is known about their social life, but it is believed that mated pairs stay together. Unlike gray wolves, which prey on large animals, red wolves seem to prefer smaller ones. They eat rabbits, squirrels, insects, even fish and plant material. They do much of their foraging at night. The kind of thick vegetation found along bayous and in Southern swamps seems to be their favorite habitat.

Although, as Malloy indicated, wolves breed well in captivity, generations of confinement dull their survival instincts and may have an unforeseeable long-term impact on their behavior. To return red wolves to the wild as soon as possible was always the goal of the recovery project. So in 1978, with the captive animals steadily increasing in number, Carley tried an experimental release on an island off South Carolina. The creatures did quite well, scientists were able to monitor their activities with radio-tracking equipment and people living in the general area cooperated fully.

Encouraged, the recovery team began looking for a suitable, permanent release site—a large, relatively undisturbed area where the wolves could find enough to eat, be free from harassment and avoid encounters with coyotes. The first choice was a remote region in Kentucky and Tennessee called the Land Between the Lakes. After the release plan was announced, however, farmers and hunters raised such a ruckus that it had to be dropped.

No sooner had that possibility evaporated than another, even better, turned up. It was a huge tract in North Carolina's mainland Dare County, property that the Prudential Insurance Company had offered to make available to the FWS. Early in 1984, that wilder-

A captive female named Diane dodges as a worker at the Missouri sanctuary tries to snare her in a net.

Arriving in small town near refuge, wolf is carefully unloaded from plane by federal wildlife officials.

After animals are outfitted with radio collars and released, Mike Phillips tracks one of them from a boat.

She will be put into a container for shipment to a rendezvous in North Carolina with seven other wolves.

ness became the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, and Warren Parker, who by then had taken over the wolf-reintroduction program, designated it his "primary candidate" as a release site. It was large enough to accommodate a number of wolf family groups, which was essential to avoid the problem of inbreeding. It was isolated, had the right kind of cover and was teeming with small prey animals, not to mention black bears, bobcats and raptors. There were no coyotes in the area.

A collar that "captures" the wolf

Fully aware that the earlier reintroduction plan failed because the public had not been adequately prepared, Parker went out of his way this time to inform the local gentry. About 1,000 people live next door to the refuge in three little communities—Stumpy Point on Pamlico Sound, a crab and oyster fishing village; East Lake, once known for its moonshine but today mainly a trailer park; and Manns Harbor, another fishing village. Parker held a number of public meetings to explain the project and dispel misconceptions about wolves. Some folks were reassured when they found out about the "capture collar" each wolf would be wearing. The collar contains a radio transmitter and tranquilizer darts that can be triggered by remote control. It enables scientists to keep track of the wolves and to knock out a wayward animal for recapture before it gets into trouble.

In 1986, preparations got under way to ship seven wolves from Washington State and one from Missouri. I went back to Eureka that fall to watch Diane be readied for her trip. She had been selected not only because of her excellent health but also because she displayed the aggressive characteristics of an alpha. (Alpha males and females are dominant animals that pair off and breed with a high rate of success.) When a technician tried to catch her with a big salmon-fishing net (above), she dodged and ran to the perimeter of the pen's chain link fence. Once cornered, however, she became immobilized with fear, and into a shipping kennel she went. Then she was flown to Raleigh-Durham for a rendezvous with the other wolves, and the whole group was whisked off to the refuge.

The plan was to keep the wolves in pens for a six-month acclimation period, during which time they were to be fed dog food, then road kills and, finally, live prey. Following the release, which was originally scheduled to occur in the spring of last year, Parker and Phillips would continue to put out road kills for a few months. After that, the animals would be on their own. But problems with the capture collar caused a lengthy postponement of the release.

I took advantage of the delay to find out how the

Carl Mann, who lives near refuge, fears authorities will forbid hunting with dogs there because of wolves.

refuge's neighbors felt about the wolf project. The reactions were decidedly mixed. Ray Paschal, who operates an auto-repair business in Stumpy Point, typified those who had a good-natured attitude. "I don't think the wolves are going to be a problem as long as they stay out of our backyards," he told me. Others were more skeptical and some, including a goodly number of deer hunters, were downright hostile. Carl Mann, a retired soldier whose great-grandfather settled Manns Harbor, took it upon himself to speak for local hunters who still run dogs on the refuge. He's convinced that the federal authorities, having already curtailed hunting with dogs, plan to eliminate it altogether. "It's our sport and we've done it for hundreds of years," he said.

Late in September I got a call from Parker advising me that the collars were ready and a release was set for the next day. The following morning I was back at the refuge watching veterinarian Larry Cooper take blood and stool samples from the eight animals and administer rabies shots, vaccines against distemper and parvo disease, heartworm medication and vitamins. The creatures were hung upside down to be weighed and then, at last, the collars were fitted.

"These animals face a harsh ordeal in this environment," Cooper observed as he worked. He talked about the mosquitoes, which carry a number of parasites, including heartworm. He talked about ticks ("I've seen lost dogs come out of here crawling with ticks swelled the size of grapes"), hookworm, tapeworm and sarcoptic mange mites. As Cooper was finishing, Parker yelled and pointed to a three-foot-long water moccasin swimming through the scum in a slough less than 15 feet away. "Yeah, snakes could be a problem, too," Cooper said. "Red wolves never did live very long in the wild—maybe seven or eight years at the most."

And then they wandered off

The next morning, the pen doors were opened and the caretakers walked away. After nearly two decades of planning and preparation, that's all there was to it. Parker called it a "soft release" because the wolves were left to wander off on their own, which, after a while, they did.

Everything went fairly well until the evening in mid-October when 13-year-old John Barnes jr., of Manns Harbor, heard his dog barking in the backyard. He glanced out the window and saw what looked like a "skinny German shepherd" eating food from his dog's dish. The wolf, a male, stopped by another home farther down the road later that night. The radio-tracking crew, following its movements, recaptured the animal, observed it for a while and then relocated it, along with its mate. Two weeks later the female was

found dead on a beach, apparently overcome by a massive infection.

Another wolf, a male that had been staying close to one of the release pens, was recaptured after his collar malfunctioned. The animal, it turned out, had been involved in a bad fight—probably, Phillips surmised, a territorial battle with a pair of the other wolves. He had 35 puncture wounds (a broken foot bone was poking through the flesh) and had lost 25 pounds. After he was treated and returned to a pen for convalescence, his partner wandered off the refuge twice. She was recaptured but developed an infection and eventually had to be destroyed.

Such problems were not unexpected. Phillips' assessment is that, on balance, the introduction has gone quite well so far. He is convinced that the vast majority of the people living in the area now support the program. None of the wolves has been shot. The animals' scats contain hair and bone, which indicates they're eating well. "I feel very good that six of them are still alive," the biologist says.

Any day now, the first contingent of wolves will be joined by eight others that have been undergoing acclimation at the refuge since being shipped there from Tacoma in January. Four of the new wolves are yearlings, which probably will not breed for a year or two. One, a female, is intended as a replacement for the first wolf that died; she will be held until she is in heat and then released close to the lone male. Another female, replacing the second dead wolf, will be held with the captive male until both are released at the same time. Meanwhile, yet another pair of wolves, relocated late last year to South Carolina's Bulls Island (which was the site of the successful 1978 experiment), have been adjusting nicely. Pups raised by those two will eventually be transferred to the Alligator River refuge so that scientists there can see how wolves fare when raised naturally in the wild, compared with those brought up in captivity.

It will be a while before the outcome of all this can be measured. This much, though, is already certain: if it works, the red wolf recovery effort will go down as one of the most important victories yet achieved in the long struggle to pull this country's endangered species back from the brink of extinction.

"When nature is left to its own devices, extinction is a natural and even vital process," Warren Parker says, "but the red wolf was not on its way to extinction until people intervened. Now we've intervened again—this time on its behalf. The rest is up to the wolf."

Pad prints in the sand show that after years of captivity red wolves are finally back on the wilderness track.

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THE *Heartbeat* OF AMERICA

TODAY'S CHEVROLET

By Richard Wolkomir

Heads up, thumbs in, butlers learn how to deliver the goods

Ivor Spencer teaches his students that there is considerably more to the job nowadays than ironing newspapers and serving bubbly

On my first day as a student at the Ivor Spencer International School for Butler Administrators, I learned how to organize a big barbecue and arrange for a show-business personality to appear at a private party. I also experienced how dicey it can be to approach someone with a trayful of drinks while balancing a glass on your head. "No, no, we need a smile, not a grin," Ivor Spencer insisted as I advanced unsteadily toward him across the suite at Houston's elegant Lancaster Hotel. I was afraid the glass would drop any second and gouge the polished oak floor.

"The point of practicing with a glass on your head is to develop *presence*," Spencer explained. "Shoulders back, head up and steady stride, not rocking from side to side, as you're doing now." Ivor took the tray and demonstrated. He smiled, just so. He stood straight, shoulders back, head high, a handsome man with gray hair and the controlled energy of a cheetah. He did not rock from side to side. The glasses did not rattle on the tray when he held it. He had *presence*.

"It's a small thing, you see, compared with managing a large staff or administering an annual budget of perhaps a million dollars or making sure of a house's security," he said in his urbane British accent. "But, as butlers, we know that everything is in the details, and we look for perfection. Also, please note that my thumbs are kept below the tray, not lapping over the top. We do not show thumbs."

That, I discovered, is the butler's way: no thumbs. The governor, a senator and two Nobel Prize winners have dropped in unexpectedly for dinner? "Leave it to me, Madame," says the butler. You have to fly to Prague, and airline tickets, hotel reservations and other arrangements must be completed in just a few hours? "It will be my pleasure, Sir," says the butler. You lost your Swiss watch while vacationing abroad and neglected to arrange for special insurance coverage? "It has been taken care of—I took the liberty," says the butler.

In the world the butler creates, everything goes smoothly, from hiring a staff to organizing the move to a new home and correctly arranging the utensils and finger bowl on a dessert plate. Before attending Spencer's school, I had never encountered a dessert plate. I did not know that lemon goes in a finger bowl only after fish (otherwise, it's rose petals). I did not know about cleaning wine stains from a decanter with a swirl of rice and soapy water. I had never been told that you can chill a bottle of Chablis by wrapping it in wet newspaper and holding it out the window of a speeding car.

I first visited the School for Butler Administrators at its headquarters in a London hotel. There I watched a dozen men and women from three continents and six countries study how to manage the intricacies of modern life with perspicacity, aplomb and flair. One student, Brian McCollum of Dublin, told me that he did not necessarily expect to work as a professional butler. "But I want to know the proper way to do things," he said. "It's not quite a finishing school but it certainly does add a bit of polish."

An expert at living with style

When I found out that Ivor Spencer offers a short-course version of his classes once a year in Hong Kong, Palm Springs and Houston, I decided to audit the Texas session to see if I could pick up some polish myself. I wanted to live with less muddle and more panache. I wanted to become my own butler. As Spencer says, a butler is an expert at living "with great style."

But the modern butler knows much more than how to buy a high-quality suit and which wine to serve with the *canard à l'orange*. Today's butler is an executive. One graduate of Spencer's school found himself responsible for choosing and purchasing his employer's corporate jet. Butlers also must be adept at everything from accounting to hiring and firing, Spencer says. And he should know. The modern butler-administrator, after all, is largely his creation.

For that matter, Spencer himself—the suave man of the world, consultant to prime ministers, movie stars, princes and queens—is largely his own invention. Some 50 years ago, when he was a child in a poor family in London's cockney East End, he would walk six miles to the glitzy West End and watch, dazzled, as the rich and famous descended upon the city's great

Spencer (center) and his students balance glasses on heads while carrying trays of champagne. The exercise helps develop the poise and assurance needed not only to serve well but to become an effective manager.

Photographs by Patrick Ward

hotels—the Savoy, Claridge's, the Dorchester. "I always hankered for the nice things," he says.

After serving in the army, getting married and having children, he found himself working at the Dorchester as an assistant chef in charge of broiling steaks and chops. It was always sweltering next to the revolving spit. Waiters and chefs rushed about with trays and tureens of hot food. Spencer's prospects depressed him. Bright and ambitious, he seemed doomed to a lifetime of dreary, low-paying labor. Then, after quitting time one evening, he went upstairs and hid behind a screen to watch a banquet for Winston Churchill. As always, he was dazzled by the spotless linen, the sumptuous floral and fruit centerpieces, the fine china and glittering crystal, the cuisine and the elegantly dressed guests. One man in particular fascinated him: a sergeant-major type, ramrod straight, who stood right behind Churchill, "dressed like a general in scarlet, white and black." A waiter told Spencer that the imposing figure was the toastmaster, an indispensable British fixture who serves as the master of ceremonies at formal occasions, announcing each speaker, reciting titles, honors and decorations—and receiving a substantial fee in return. "In that moment I saw a way out of all my troubles," Spencer recalls.

To his young wife's alarm, he resigned from the Dorchester, investing his minuscule savings in a toastmaster's regalia. To learn the trade, he apprenticed himself to an established professional, surrendering all his fees while moonlighting as a waiter to support his family. When he began working as a toastmaster, Spencer frequently found himself dealing with butlers and he keenly observed their ways. Over time, he became renowned throughout London not only as a superb announcer of speakers and guests but also as a consummate arranger of entire affairs. He hired caterers, planned menus, booked entertainments, supervised staffs. His "full service" approach made him one of Britain's leading practitioners. He was elected President of the Guild of Professional Toastmasters. He presided over three royal functions a week, organized the wedding of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's son and organized hundreds of embassy banquets. He hobnobbed with statesmen, tycoons and movie stars. He even played a toastmaster in the TV miniseries *Poor Little Rich Girl*, starring Farrah Fawcett.

In 1980, Spencer arranged a party in California for a motion picture producer. "You should have a butler," he told the busy man. "Good idea," said the producer, "get me one." Back in London, Spencer interviewed a

Exemplifying Spencer's admonition that "everything is in the details," students examine glasses for smudges.

Two students watch a third light a cigar in tobacco shop, where they learn how to choose superior brands.

number of candidates but decided they were all unsuitable for butlering in the United States—too rigid, too limited in their skills, too easily offended by bad manners. "The butler used to be the head servant, helping the lady of the house run a staff," he says. "Today, the lady of the house is a career woman. Modern couples need someone to run everything for them. They have money but they don't have time." To create a modern butler, Spencer started his school, holding the first class seven years ago in London.

Since then, the school has turned out dozens of graduates. Most of them—nearly 50 at last count—end up working in America, a phenomenon Spencer ascribes to economics. While a butler in England may earn the equivalent of $15,000 a year, his U.S. counterpart can earn $30,000 to $55,000, with the usual fringe benefits in addition to comfortable living quarters, a car and meals.

The butler's work is never done

Butlers work harder here, however. One graduate recently called Spencer from the United States to complain that he had labored from dawn to 3 A.M. every day for a month, without any time off. When Spencer called the employer, the man was chagrined. He said he hadn't realized he was driving his butler so hard. "You know you have a butler only when he isn't there," Spencer says.

Having a butler has become more of a status symbol in some parts of this country than having a Rolls-Royce. While I was taking Spencer's classes in Houston, a corporate president called, seeking a butler. "It will be good for my business," the executive explained. Most of the school's graduates work for corporate chiefs, although several, including four of the destitute youths Spencer sometimes trains at his own expense, have gone to Buckingham Palace. Other alumni are employed at luxury hotels; a few of Spencer's protégés work for entertainers.

One graduate, a former Canadian naval officer, became singer Linda Ronstadt's butler. He telephoned Spencer one day from her Malibu beach house, where he was sunbathing while his employer was off on tour. "I work 2 months out of 12—this is the life," he said contentedly. "I'll bet $20 you quit within a year," Spencer replied. Several weeks later, the butler called back. He said the singer had come home too exhausted to entertain guests. "The biggest event of his day was counting the raisins for her macrobiotic breakfast," Spencer says. The butler quit because he felt he was not earning his large salary.

"Our students learn that they're going to have to deal with a lot of pressure, and that's really what they want," explains Spencer. "Personally, I'd rather work

Visiting a posh shirtmaker in London, future butlers, buttoned up, take notes while a salesman explains.

Worker at custom footwear manufacturer shows pupils the special last upon which a shoe is made by hand.

While seated student portrays a gluttonous guest, Spencer demonstrates how to respond with restraint.

Spencer teaches students how to bow. A deep bow from the waist is reserved for persons of very high rank.

at a banquet—and make it run beautifully—than be a guest." As one Houston student, Brian Still, put it: "We learn how to run functions like a 1,000-person garden party and, having acquired this knowledge, we're champing at the bit to use it."

Long ago, butlers had much less responsibility. In medieval British homes, the butler was known as the "boteler," derived from the French for "bottle bearer." He supervised the wine cellar. In the 18th century, the butler's status rose—but not much. He still ranked below the land steward (who managed the entire estate), the house steward (who supervised all things domestic), the clerk of the stables, the clerk of the kitchen, the chef, the confectioner, the baker, the bailiff (who assisted the land steward) and the valet (the employer's dresser and companion). The butler was in charge of the liquors, glassware, china and silver. He also served the wine. A contemporary servant's manual admonished him to see "that the glasses are kept extremely clean, and the wine poured into them in a genteel and easy manner."

In time, the various other servants' functions were consolidated in the butler. Now chief of staff, he supervised the cook, housekeeper, maids and others, combining the valet's and the steward's roles with his own food-and-drink expertise. But new tax laws made estates harder and harder to keep. Britain's legions of servants melted away. Around 1900, the Marquis of Bath's Longleat estate had 43 indoor servants, as well as armies of outside workers to tend the gardens and stables. By 1973, the domestic staff there had dwindled to a single married couple. "Before 1939, Britain had perhaps 30,000 butlers," Spencer says. "Now there are only about 70, and nearly all of them are employed by the royal family, by wealthy Arabs who live in England, by embassies or in a few stately homes."

Mastering the correct tone

Most Americans know about butlers only from old movies or the television series *Upstairs, Downstairs*, in which the formidable Mr. Hudson rules the servants' quarters. Then, of course, there is novelist P. G. Wodehouse's gentlemanly genius, Jeeves, the epitome of butlerhood, who eternally saves his chuckleheaded employer, Bertie Wooster, from his own fecklessness. Jeeves is a master of understatement, and Spencer trains his students to adopt the same tone. "We always speak in a slightly lower voice than whomever we're talking to," he says. He also teaches students that a butler's success depends on his attention to detail, just as Jeeves once admonished Bertie: "There is no time, Sir, at which ties do not matter."

Spencer's students come from all walks of life. In London I met a petroleum engineer who was tired of

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Pupils keep stiff upper lip while Spencer explains how to deal with an awkward moment—the discovery of an unexpected guest. Butler is not supposed to acknowledge the guest unless she (or he) addresses him.

working in deserts, a bank officer who was bored with banking and an insurance agent who was weary of the rat race. My classmates in Houston, who each paid $3,500 to enroll in the 21-day course, came from equally diverse backgrounds. David Baker, a 51-year-old Englishman with white hair and a neatly clipped beard, had worked as a training coordinator for an oil company in Saudi Arabia, a mathematics teacher, a professional radio singer and a hotel manager. Graham Stevenson, 26, joined the British Royal Air Force when he was 16, becoming an officer's batman, or valet; later he was a professional golfer in Japan. Brian Still, 55, grew up in the hotel business (his parents owned one); he was employed as a waiter on the *Queen Mary* and the *Queen Elizabeth* and then worked as an accountant for a while.

In London, where classes may have 20 or more students and the course runs for eight weeks, an assistant helps teach. In Houston, where classes are much smaller and the course is concentrated, Spencer does everything himself. His tutorial style is intense and dramatic. "When you're buying fresh salmon from a caterer for a banquet, remember that the portion from the tail is not as nice as the midportion, and the head portion is small and not nice," he explained one day. "Only an epicure would complain, but we can't have that. We ask for *all* center cuts." Suddenly he became the school's all-purpose imaginary employer, Mr. Lee, glaring at his dinner plate: "What the bloody devil is this? Tail portions?"

As Spencer lectured and emoted, we students diligently scribbled notes, knowing we would later have to act it all out in practice sessions. I took seven pages of notes on how to organize a barbecue for 1,000 guests. Included is a sketch that shows several cooking stations arranged in a semicircle around a bandstand; the stations are separated by service bars. Each station is grilling and serving a different entree: sausages, salmon, hamburgers, steaks, chicken. As the butler, according to my notes, I would scrutinize that field like

Mr. Wolkomir wants a butler but he can't afford to hire one, and doing the job himself, he says, takes too much time away from polishing phrases.

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Spencer graduate Peter Waterhouse polishes silver while his American employer's children enjoy a snack.

Butler Graham Stevenson accompanies daughter of the boss on a shopping trip to a boutique in Houston.

a combat general. Wielding a two-way radio, I would closely monitor the chefs and tell the busboys when to bring more food to cook. Depending on dinner traffic, I might order the steak chef to cut back and the salmon chef to cook more. I would use high-quality plastic tumblers to sidestep the possibility of broken glass near the swimming pool. I would see that soiled plates, silver, napkins and tablecloths were continually replaced. I would have boxes and wrapping paper ready in case the host or hostess decided to make a present of some cheesecake to a guest. I would allow the staff to eat before the guests but I would refrain from eating until afterward. I would douse the grill fires at the end, and produce a detailed cost accounting.

When I talked to some of Spencer's graduates, I asked them how butlering goes in the real world. I learned that the jobs vary. In London, Andrew Hastings is a butler for a Saudi businessman and his English wife. He told me that he is often left in charge of their London home and staff for weeks at a time. Hasting's grandfather, also a butler, had refused to teach his grandson, saying, "You'll spend your life in a pantry." Discouraged by the frequent layoffs involved in factory work, Hastings finally attended Spencer's school and found butlering had changed. "My grandfather was an old-fashioned English butler of that other era," he said. "Well, we're the jet set now, aren't we?"

I learned what he meant from another Spencer alumnus, Peter Waterhouse (above), a six-foot-six former rugby player in London who went to work for a Texas widow. Recently he accompanied his employer's family to Spain, Switzerland, Morocco and other points east, handling all travel arrangements and money. In addition to his duties as household manager and arranger of social events, Waterhouse serves as a sort of elder brother for the boss' teenage son and daughter, which may involve pickup games of basketball and football or hunting expeditions on the family's ranches. "I wouldn't want to be a butler in England, where you're treated more as a servant," he said. "Here you're treated like a person and people appreciate what you know and what you can do. I put in long hours, but I have my own apartment. I also get to use my employer's season tickets to the Houston Rockets basketball games now and then."

Waterhouse works in dark trousers and a casual shirt unless his employer is entertaining. Then he puts on "black and stripes," a black jacket and dark gray, striped trousers. He never dons the once traditional butler's uniform of black tie and tails.

Bryce West, a college dropout from Albuquerque, took Spencer's course in 1984. Now he is butler for the president of a Los Angeles corporation. Besides running the household, he takes care of five cars and oversees a large wine cellar. Once a week he arises at 4:30 A.M. to visit a wholesale market, where he selects the flowers that fill his employer's home. When the family attends a concert at the Hollywood Bowl, he drives the limousine and serves a preshow picnic dinner. Then he clears away the dishes and takes a seat near his employer's box to enjoy the music. I asked West how other concertgoers react when they see him providing such formal service. "It always causes quite a stir," he replied. "I'm often mistaken for a caterer."

Now that I have a few butler lessons under my belt, I'm ready to create a stir or two myself. I know how to hire a staff and how to dismiss a staff. Just try me on the importance of matching food and wine. I know a lot about making visitors feel welcome ("Your usual, Sir?"). I know how to make an inventory for insurance

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purposes, run an efficient kitchen and prepare a theater-supper party. Try me on hygiene and the causes of food poisoning, or moving to a new house or getting the best possible value when purchasing. If you want to organize a shoot, I'm your man.

I've also learned some butler secrets. Years ago, the butler used to lightly bake the morning newspaper in the oven before delivering it to his employer's bedroom. The heat set the ink so it would not blacken the master's fingers. Baking is no longer necessary, thanks to improved paper and printing, but the butler may still iron the news when it contains irritating creases.

I know about the butler's all-important pantry book, too. Only these days it's usually a computerized databank. In it, he records every conceivably useful tidbit of information, from a frequent guest's favorite drink to birthdays and anniversaries to what gifts his employers have given to whom. When Christmas is coming and the boss asks, "Richard, should we get Aunt Harriet a golden-egg paperweight?" I can consult my database and respond: "You gave that exact gift to her daughter three years ago, Sir. Might I suggest one of those crystal pen-and-pencil holders featured at Neiman-Marcus instead?" Spencer advises his students not to let their employers know about the pantry book. "They'll think you're a genius with a phenomenal memory," he says.

Butlers can be addictive. One of Spencer's graduates worked in New York City for a couple who went through a divorce. They divided up their assets amiably enough, but they fought over one sticking point: Who gets the butler? The husband won.

The dependence an employer develops—and here we get back to basics, again—results from the butler's relentless attention to detail. One Spencer graduate, for example, worked for a corporation president who rushed off to an important meeting early one morning. The session had just begun when the executive's secretary announced that his butler wished to see him. The man found the butler waiting outside his office with a briefcase. Inside the briefcase were the boss' false teeth. The butler has since posted a tiny "t" sign in the bathroom as a daily reminder.

For butlers, the considerable satisfactions of the job seem to derive mainly from "looking for perfection"—and finding it. A young English butler named Robert Charman runs marathons wearing a T-shirt that sums it all up. The front of the shirt says, "Ivor Spencer International School for Butler Administrators." The back says: "It's a pleasure, Sir."

A former professional golfer, Stevenson gets back in the swing during practice session at driving range.

Striving for perfection, two aspiring gentlemen's gentlemen align the silverware while teacher looks on.

Pontiac Grand Prix

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By Jerry Reedy

A private library that keeps its eye on the public

You don't have to be a card-carrying scholar: headhunters, dance fans, debaters—all are welcome at the Newberry, now a sprightly 100

I learned about Chicago's Newberry Library the way I've learned about almost everything else—the hard way. I had gone there to do the research for an exhibit on North American Indian leaders and to write a book to go with it. I knew next to nothing about the library, its people, its traditions, its collections—or its rules.

As a result of my ignorance, my first week in the rare book reading room came as something of a shock. It was like a combination of Jesuit school and Marine boot camp. Everything I did was wrong. I was reprimanded for transgressions ranging from taking photographs of pictures in books, to laying my raincoat across the table, to using my briefcase to hold a book open. For years I had done all these things with impunity in public and university libraries. To me a book was a multipurpose item, like a Swiss Army knife. Besides reading it, you could stash bills or billets-doux or butterflies in its leaves, or even use it to prop open a window—as I had once routinely done with a high school Latin text.

I soon learned, however, that at the Newberry you treat books with respect and occasionally awe. If you want pictures or photocopies, there are special people to make them for you. If you're wearing a coat, you check it in the cloakroom (along with your umbrella, your newspaper and your lunch). If you want to hold open a particularly old or rare book, you ask for a beanbag "snake" covered in velvet. And if a book happens to be fragile, somebody will give you a little futon to put under it. You never, never take notes in ink when working with rare books.

Velvet "snakes" hold open 15th-century *Book of Hours*. Above it is *The Game and Playe of Chesse*, 1482.

Relaxing on marble staircase of original library building, a reader continues his perusal of a book.

The reason for all these precautions is that most of the Newberry's books are not ordinary books. Quite a few are one of a kind. If you're looking for the latest by Helen Gurley Brown or Wayne Dyer, you will not find it here. On the other hand, if you need to have a look, say, at a first edition of *Moby Dick* or *Don Quixote*, an original score by Mozart or Chopin, a letter written by Michelangelo or Napoleon, or one of the first complete Bibles printed in English, then you've definitely come to the right place.

The Newberry, now celebrating the 100th anniversary of its founding, belongs to an exclusive organization known as the Independent Research Libraries

Photographs by Joel Freid

A rich heritage for the public

Librarian Emeritus Bill Towner, who opened library to public, sits before a portrait of founder Newberry.

Association. There are only 15 such libraries in the United States. Two other prominent members, and ones with which the Newberry is often compared, are the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. and the Huntington Library in San Marino, California.

A series of tragedies led to the creation of the library. Walter Loomis Newberry was a pioneer who moved to Chicago from Detroit in 1833 and proceeded to amass a fortune by speculating in land. He also held a number of prominent civic posts. At home Newberry maintained a respectable "gentleman's library," and he corresponded with such literary figures as Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper.

Newberry's will stipulated that in the off event his two daughters died childless, half his estate would go toward the creation of a library. Both of his daughters, Julia and Mary, were healthy and in their teens—not to mention pretty and rich—when the will was drawn. It was assumed, undoubtedly, that they would marry and have children.

But events proved different. Newberry died at sea in 1868, 400 miles out of Le Havre. His body was returned to Chicago in a barrel, an event noted in *The Police Gazette*, which carried a picture of three men rolling the cask to his grave in Graceland Cemetery. Next came the Chicago Fire of 1871. It destroyed the family home and with it Newberry's modest library. Most tragic of all, however, were the deaths of the unmarried daughters—Mary in 1874 in southern France, Julia in 1876 in Rome. With the death of Newberry's widow in 1885, the long-shot bequest took effect.

A library without a book to its name

Newberry's estate totaled close to $4.3 million, and so, with a cool $2.15 million in 1885 dollars, the library was off to a flying start but with nary a book to its name. "The Newberry didn't begin as a collection of books," says Lawrence W. (Bill) Towner, the library's legendary past president and librarian. "It began as a collection of money." In 1887 the library was formally instituted, and in 1893 the Romanesque building on West Walton Street was finished.

The first librarian of the Newberry was William Frederick Poole, a Yale graduate, professional librarian and the man who created *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature.* In 1889 Poole landed the music library of Count Pio Resse, a collector who lived in Florence. In addition to 751 books and manuscripts, the library included some exceptional musical works, among them a first edition of the first extant opera ever performed—Jacopo Peri's *Euridice*, written for the marriage of Marie de Médicis and Henry IV of France in 1600. With the Resse acquisition, Bill Towner says, "the Newberry overnight became one of the leading Ameri-

Women of Walter Newberry's family: his daughters Julia (center) and Mary died tragically abroad in the 1870s. At death of his widow, Julia Clapp (left), half of his $4.3 million estate went to form library.

can libraries in the history and theory of music."

Poole next acquired the collection of Henry Probasco, which comprised a large selection of incunabula; the first, second and fourth Shakespeare folio editions; 88 rare Bibles; 10 editions of Homer, beginning with the Aldine of 1517; 9 of Dante, from 1477; and 8 of Horace.

The Newberry houses the first Latin edition of Columbus' report to Ferdinand and Isabella. Its first edition of Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* is believed to be the only copy in existence. A copy of the second book ever printed in English resides here—Jacobus de Cessolis' *The Game and Playe of Chesse*, printed by William Caxton in 1482. And John Bunyan's *The Barren Fig-Tree* is the only recorded complete copy.

You can also find first editions of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, printed in 1590, and Thomas More's *Utopia*, printed in 1516. And the library has a copy of *Fanshawe: A Tale*, which Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote but disliked so much that he tried to track down and destroy every copy. It is now very rare because Hawthorne almost succeeded.

While the Newberry takes pride in its individual rare volumes, it prefers to emphasize its great research collections. Foremost among these is the Edward E. Ayer Collection, given in 1911 by one of the library's first board members. It now contains some 100,000 titles on the discovery and development of the Americas, especially the relations between Indians and whites.

Jerry Reedy is a Chicago writer. Now researching pioneer journals at the Newberry, he has learned to check his coat, lunch and newspaper at the door.

In all, the library houses 1.4 million volumes, 5 million manuscript pages and 60,000 historic maps, with an estimated net worth of more than $300 million. The oldest complete manuscript is a homiliary dating from the early part of the ninth century.

Working around rare books and manuscripts in a major research library sounds like a glamorous job, but the process is not always as orderly as you might think. Diana Haskell, curator of the Newberry's Midwest manuscripts, remembers when the Ben Hecht papers arrived. Hecht was the legendary Chicago playwright and newspaperman who coauthored *The Front Page* with Charles MacArthur. Excitement was running high when the Hecht materials came in, but the mood quickly turned somber. "It was a dreadful mountain of stuff," Haskell remembers. "It was like opening a garbage bag."

Haskell and her assistants eventually found and catalogued Hecht's manuscripts, along with reading glasses, pipes, letters from Harpo Marx and an Oscar that Hecht won for the screenplay of *Underworld*. A man of few pretensions, he had used the Oscar as a doorstop. Among the items that didn't make it into the archives were a pair of Rose Hecht's hosiery and a spatula covered with dried egg. Nor did the manuscript to *The Front Page*. It was never found.

Haskell has had better luck with the Malcolm Cowley collection. Cowley, now almost 90, continues to send the library his papers on a regular basis. One batch contained letters from his wife Peggy, written from Mexico where she had run off with Hart Crane. Cowley's papers always arrive in stout Scotch whisky cases.

In 1962, five librarians and two-thirds of a century

Curator Diana Haskell deals with wide collection of manuscripts and papers.

Truex Upchurch, a civil engineer, devotes lunch hours to family-history research.

after Poole had died, Bill Towner was appointed librarian, beginning what is now known as the Towner era. Towner ran the library for 24 years, a period during which the endowment doubled to $25 million.

"Until Towner came along the library lived rather smugly and rather comfortably on its endowment," says James Wells, former vice president and rare books curator. "Nobody ever had to raise any money and nobody tried. In the 1960s it became obvious that the library couldn't continue that way. Bill invented many programs that required money and then he went out and found it."

Most significant of all, perhaps, Towner put his formidable energy and drive behind programs that would encourage greater use of the collections not only by scholars but by members of the general public.

Towner was a Phi Beta Kappa who graduated from Cornell College in Iowa in 1942. He became a pilot and spent much of the war transporting planeloads of "beer, peanuts and Chinese soldiers." After the war he picked up his master's and doctorate on the G.I. Bill, then taught history at MIT and the College of William and Mary. When the Newberry decided to make him its sixth librarian, he was on a research fellowship at Harvard. He drove to his new job in a '57 Chevy convertible with four children and his wife, Rachel, who was pregnant with twins.

Only two years after his arrival at the Newberry, Towner set the staid world of private libraries on its ear by snatching the Silver Collection from the outstretched arms of the University of Texas. Louis H. Silver was a wealthy Chicago hotelier who had died a year after Towner took over. The London *Times* hailed the group of books as "the most distinguished collection of English literary first editions formed by a private collector in our time."

Trustees of the estate had a tentative oral agreement to sell the books to the Texans for $2.75 million. Towner quickly countered with an offer directly to the Silver family, who wanted the collection to remain in Chicago. Because the university's offer was not firm, the Newberry won out. In the process, the library kept half of the $125,000 in broker fees that the family had saved by the direct sale.

One way the Newberry draws scholars into its collections is by underwriting their research. It has one of the largest library-based fellowship programs in the country and currently bestows about $350,000 per year

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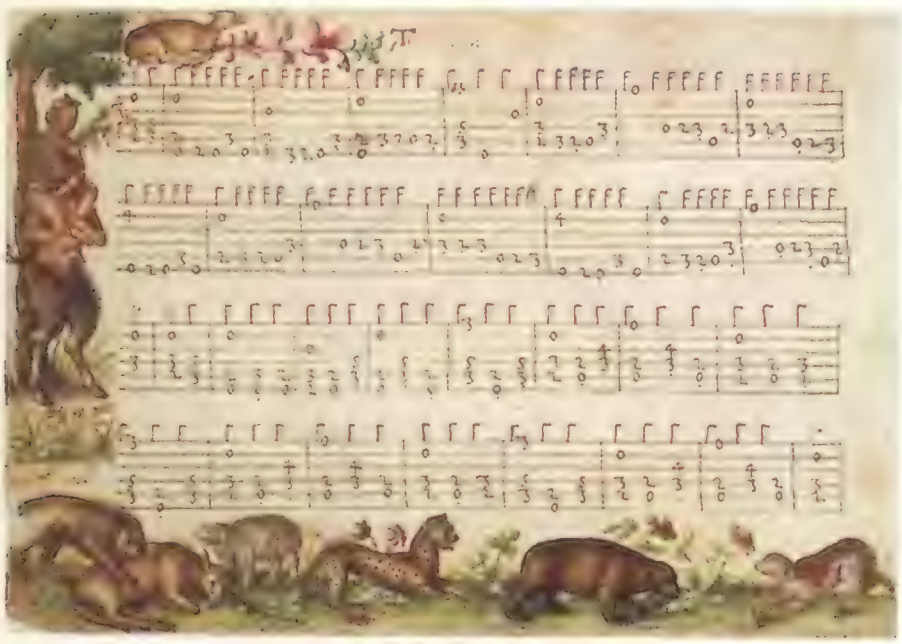
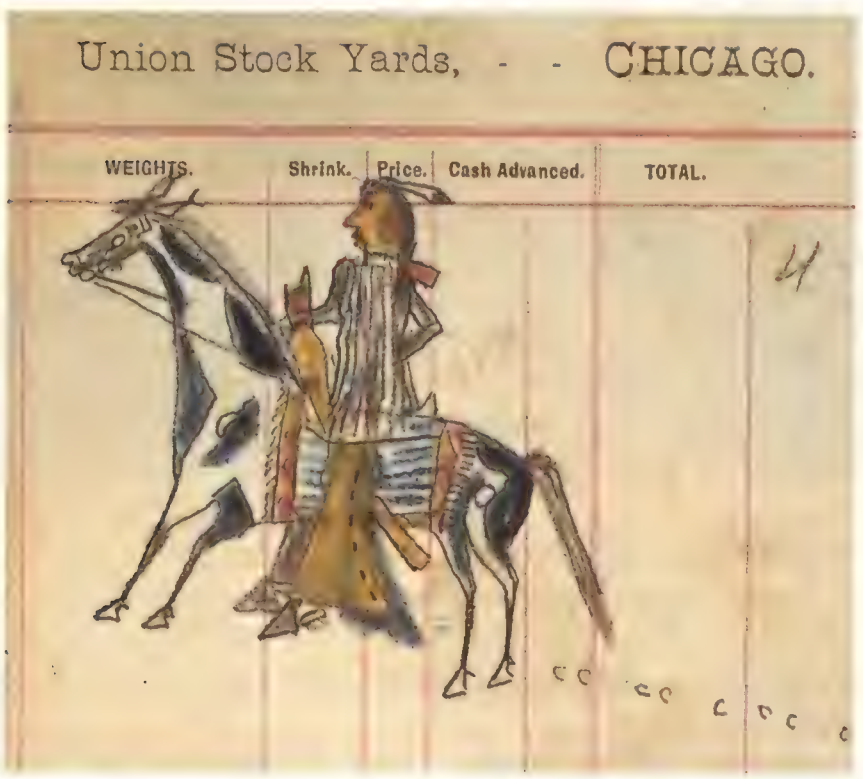
Gouache illustration from Dutch guide *Schermkunst*, 1595, shows accepted attack and defense postures.



Earliest known manuscript of Renaissance lute tablature is from Italian *Compositione* by Capirola.



A page from a Cheyenne "brag book": Indians used ledger books of whites to record their tribal exploits.

on 60 scholars. "What Towner did, to some extent," says James Wells, "was to turn the place into an academic research institute, almost a grad school."

Adds Harold Cannon of the National Endowment for the Humanities, "The Newberry is a great *producer* of scholarship." Perhaps the highest compliment paid the Newberry was by one of the city's book dealers. He had his ashes scattered on the library's lawn.

At the same time Towner was attracting scholars to the Newberry, he was breaking down barriers to the public. "When I came here in 1962 the library had an admissions office where everybody was interviewed," he says. "You had to have a very good reason to be let in. I told the trustees that I had spent the past 15 years of my life trying to get people into libraries and that I didn't want to spend the rest of my life trying to keep them out."

A brief visit to the general reading room shows how successful Towner's policy has been. On a typical Saturday morning recently, the room was nearly filled to its capacity of 92 people. The genealogists among them now have their own reference desk and convenient access to more than 100,000 books that contain the kind of information they need. In the course of an average year they alone will log some 9,000 reader days.

When Towner arrived, the genealogists were squirreled away in a small room by themselves. "There was a fear that they'd contaminate the scholars," he recalls. At first Towner shared the commonly held belief among academics that genealogists were nothing more than headhunters. But he changed his view shortly after coming to the Newberry. "I came to realize that this was kind of a populist use of history, and that these people had a right to try to recover for themselves a usable past, particularly in the society we live in now."

A shirtmaker for General Cornwallis

Civil engineer Truex Upchurch is one of the beneficiaries of Towner's liberal attitude. For the past three years, he has devoted his lunch hours and one full evening a week to his family's history. Upchurch doesn't consider himself a scholar, but so far he has scoured the pages of more than 2,000 books, and the end is nowhere in sight. He characterizes his forebears as "a very boring lot," but happily there have been a few exceptions. He has managed to trace three lines of his family back to the *Mayflower* and one of those to William the Conqueror. And—a small nugget—he found out that one person on the family tree used to make shirts for General Cornwallis during the British occupation of New York. "I've pretty much exhausted all the easy sources," he says, but he intends to keep digging and hopes to publish privately under the title "The Ancestry of Truex Upchurch."

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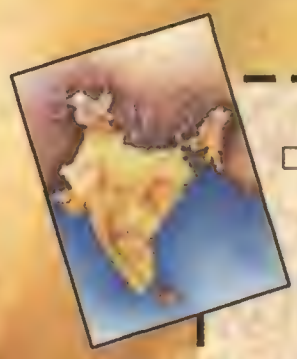

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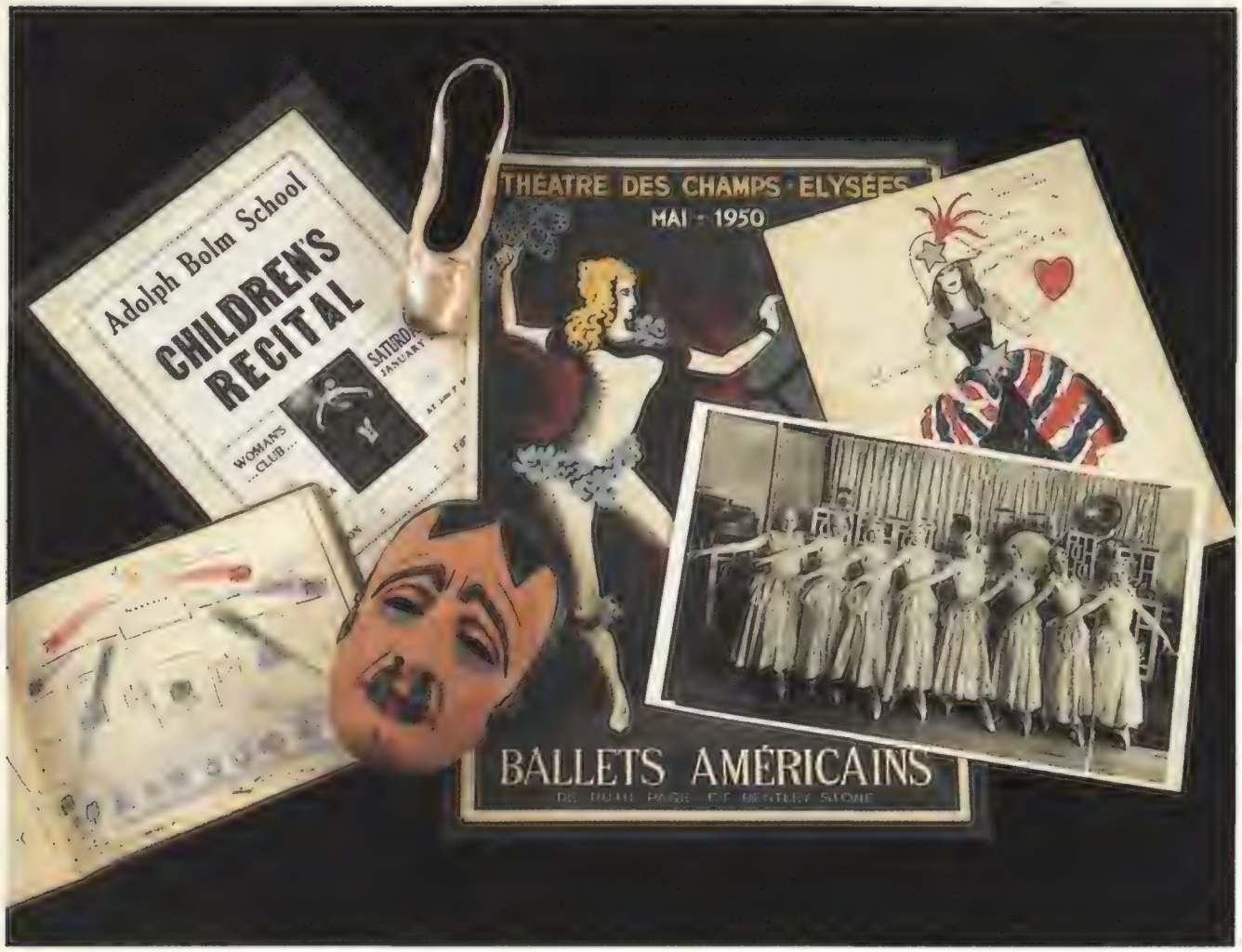

A medley from library's archive of Chicago dance includes a 1920s flyer, costume sketch, lighting plans for ballet, chorus line from 50 years ago and a ballet slipper, size four, that is signed "Fonteyn."

The tradition of public access that Towner promoted has also carried over into the library's broad range of special programs. The only criterion is that the event must tie in with one of the collections in some way. An exhibit of items from the Rudy Lamont Ruggles Collection of Americana included Thomas Jefferson's copy of *The Federalist*, with the names of its anonymous authors annotated in Jefferson's own hand; John Jay's commission as first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, signed by George Washington; and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Among the literary works trotted out for the occasion was a trio of first editions—Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*, Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

In cooperation with Chicago's City Lit Theater Company, the library presented scenes from the books of local novelist Saul Bellow. A young New Zealand actress drew attention to the library's substantial Katherine Mansfield collection with a critically acclaimed one-woman show based on Mansfield's life. And the library's superb collection of Chicago dance materials provided the raison d'être for a performance by Chicago's celebrated Hubbard Street Dance Company.

For sheer raucous fun, few of the Newberry's programs can compare with the revival of the Bughouse Square debates. Bughouse Square is the grassy little park that lies immediately across the street from the library. In the 1920s and '30s it was where Chicago's soapbox orators held forth, speechifying on everything from old-time religion to free love and communism. Chicago author Studs Terkel recalls that the tour bus companies always slipped the speakers two or three dollars to pick up the tempo a bit as the buses went by. Two of the square's best-known characters were One-Arm Charly Wendorf and Ben Reitman. Wendorf would often launch into a long monologue explaining how he lost his arm in World War I. "The story always ended the same way," Terkel remembers. "He'd say, 'That arm of mine is somewhere in the province of Cognac, nurturing all those grapes. If you've been enjoying Hennessy, or Martell or Courvoisier, you have my arm to thank.' "

In the first modern version of the Bughouse Square debates, in 1986, one topic was pornography and the Meese Commission. The debate pitted Jane Whicher, staff counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, against Alan Sears, executive director of the commission. Sears argued that pornography should be censored because it provokes violent behavior toward women; Whicher disagreed. In her closing argument, she pointed out—ever so slyly, according to witnesses—that Sears, as a member of the Meese Commission, had undoubtedly looked at more pornography than most, yet during the time they had spent alone in a room at the library, he had not laid a hand on her.

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Jerry Reedy

Assorted Chicagoans watch debate on maternity leave at famed Bughouse Square, across from the library.

This past summer the Bughouse Square debates featured two issues—maternity benefits in the workplace and AIDS-contact tracing—and again the division fell fairly neatly along liberal and conservative lines. The crowd—an amorphous amalgam of young and old, straight and gay, hip and unhip—asked a lot of questions, but in marked contrast to the previous summer's debate, rarely interrupted and only occasionally jeered.

In addition to sponsoring the debates, the Newberry supplied live calliope music, a popcorn wagon and a portable john. In front of the temporary stage, red, white and blue bunting billowed in the wind, lending a patriotic air to the proceedings. When it was over, workers took down the bunting and dismantled the stage. A truck hauled the toilet away. Only a hand-lettered sign remained. It said: "Where is One-Arm Charly When We Need Him?"

Bill Towner retired from his post more than a year ago. He moved out of the oak-paneled office with the high bookshelves and into much smaller, one might say Spartan, quarters off a storeroom. His name isn't even on the door, but he is now doing what he has really wanted to do all along—research. Towner is studying the common characteristics of 450 subscribers to a volume containing 250 religious lectures by Samuel Willard that was published in 1726 in Boston.

Upstairs in Towner's old office, scanning a computer screen, sits his successor, Charles T. Cullen, a Jeffersonian scholar and legal historian who holds a PhD from the University of Virginia. Cullen is a busy man these days. He has a card catalog to computerize, a $400,000 deficit to wipe out and $12.5 million in new endowment funds to raise.

Like Towner, Cullen was in the middle of something when the call came from the Newberry. He was editing *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* at Princeton. But the idea of heading up the Newberry appealed to him and so did the library's policy of encouraging the general public to use its collections. "Well over half the people who come here are not professional scholars, but they're doing serious work that they can't do in a public library," Cullen says. "We want to continue to attract that educated public, those people who are interested in learning and in exercising their minds."

Cullen likes to point out that many of the programs offered by the Newberry, while intended for the general public, sacrifice nothing in intellectual rigor. "We had a very knowledgeable professor give a course on the Arthurian legends," he says. "It was quite scholarly. Some of these programs are structured in such a way that scholars can come to them—and they do." Tom Hoberg, who has a PhD in history, can attest to that. He recently joined the Jane Austen Society and regularly attends its meetings at the Newberry. Says Hoberg, "Most of the people who belong to the society are not academics, and I find that refreshing. The academic community can get awfully incestuous. These people are amateurs—in the best sense of the word."

Cullen is clearly pleased by the attitude of the scholars on his inherited staff. Like Cullen himself, they enjoy being around people who come to the Newberry to learn. "If the people are learning, the scholars are as excited by that as they are by someone who might be here to write a book for tenure," he says. "People seem to think of scholarship as something that's limited to this fraternity of PhD-holders. I'd like to dispel that view. A scholar is somebody who's doing research, who's learning and who's sharing what he's learning."

As the Newberry enters its second century, it would appear to be in good hands—yet again.

Librarian Charles Cullen, a Jeffersonian scholar, plans to continue democratic policy at the Newberry.

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Obviously influenced by space-age environment in which he worked, David Em made this computer image, titled *Persepol*, in 1980. The materials he "painted" with were computer programs devised by James Blinn.

By Paul Trachtman

An Impressionist with a computer

Artist David Em has spent a decade exploring electronic light, working in the shadow of scientists at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory

In David Em's world, paint is not a pigment but the glow of electronic light on a video screen, and a brush is not something with bristles but a computer program simulating brush features such as size, shape and the color it is "dipped" in. What the artist actually holds is a metal-tipped stylus, and to paint with it he draws it lightly across a "digitizing pad," a sort of magic slate that transmits the corresponding lines to the screen.

Em, 36, went from a traditional art school background to working with industrial plastics for sculpture, and then to the control of light and color on video monitors, before encountering computers. He is one of the first artists ever to gain access to the most advanced computer graphics technology, which has been mainly dedicated to scientific, military and advertising uses, or occasionally to making high-tech movies. The results will appear next month in an extraordinary art book being published by Harry N. Abrams. Em's images, seen on these pages, may be the art world's equivalent of astronaut Neil Armstrong's footprint on the

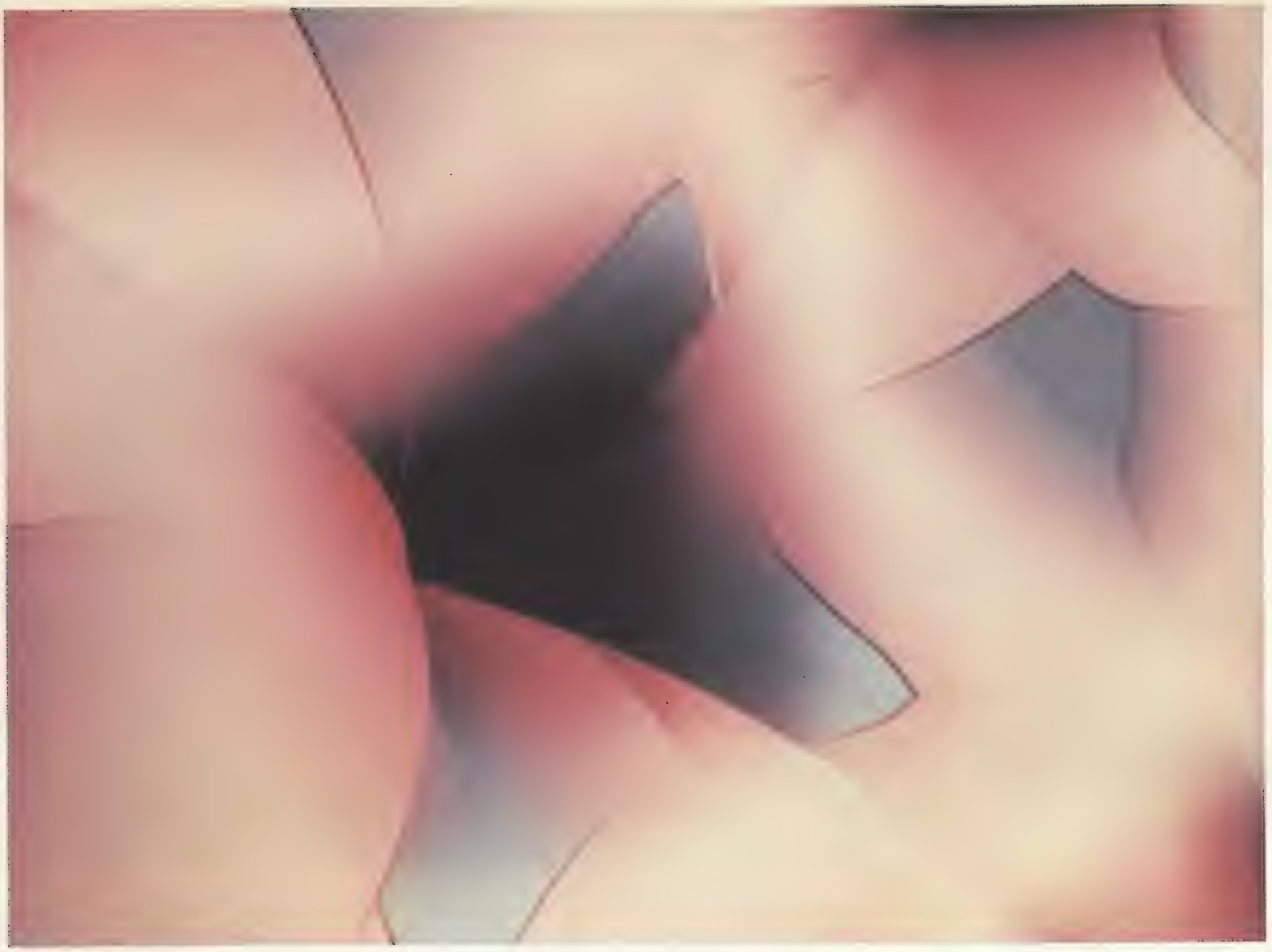
Em made the image *Nubes* in 1985. He thinks that computers are as mysterious to artists now as paint and brushes would have been to cave artists. A gallery of other Em works appears on the next three pages.

moon. Indeed, much of Em's work has been done in the wee hours of the night at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, California, a facility ordinarily occupied with image processing and mission control for the space flybys of distant planets.

He was there during JPL's "glory years," Em recalls. "Photographs taken of Mars by the Viking Mars lander and of Jupiter and Saturn by the Voyager spacecraft flybys were beamed directly to JPL, where they were decoded and displayed to the world. As computers on board the spacecraft sent back the picture data, the features of the planets and their moons were scrolled onto computer screens and seen by human eyes for the first time. Those of us watching felt as if we had been transported millions of miles from Earth. The wild cheers of the scientists filled the control rooms, and for months before and after a mission the air was alive with the astrophysicists' talk of trajectories, viewing angles and space phenomena. Inevitably, a lot of this activity seeped into my imagery. While the scientists around me were using the computers to take snapshots of outer space, I was using them to design and document worlds of my own."

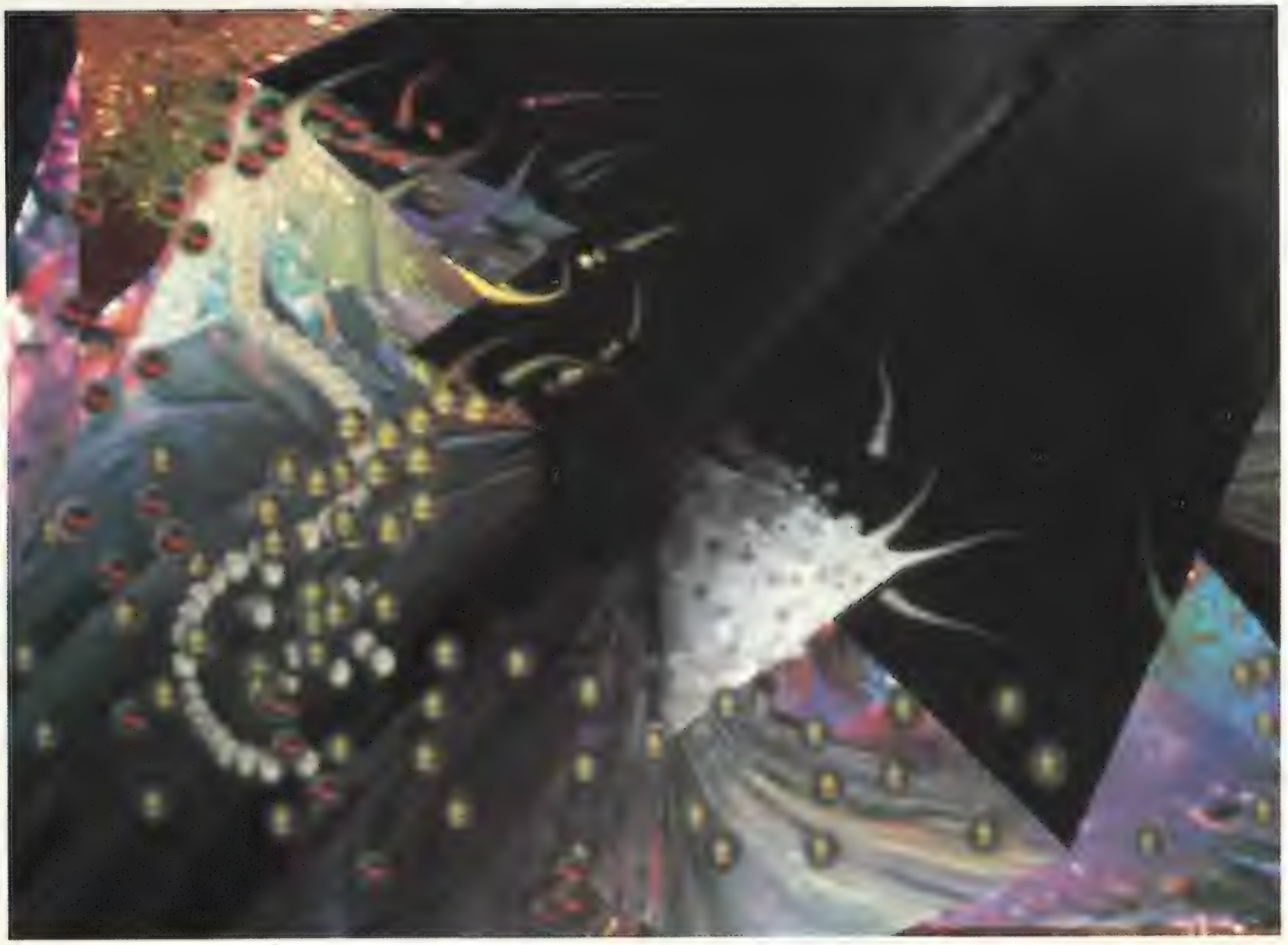
At JPL, Em worked with computer programs developed by James Blinn for purposes such as simulating the surfaces of the planets or the rings of Saturn. While Blinn produced scientifically accurate images, Em transformed the surface features, with all the twists and textures of the programs, into art. The lab itself, he says, resembled "an ascetic spaceship."

After several years in this environment, Em retreated to New Mexico to work on real canvases with real paintbrushes for a year. Returning to the JPL computers, he realized "how similar my pursuit of the properties of electronic light was to the Impressionists' studies of natural light, but how different our circumstances were. Where Monet painted sunlit poplars by the riversides, I had traded in the direct observation of nature for a pitch-black computer room with radiation pouring into my eyeballs."



Michele, 1986

Zwirlz, 1986



Spark, 1986

The Five of Us, 1983

Ellen, 1986 (detail)

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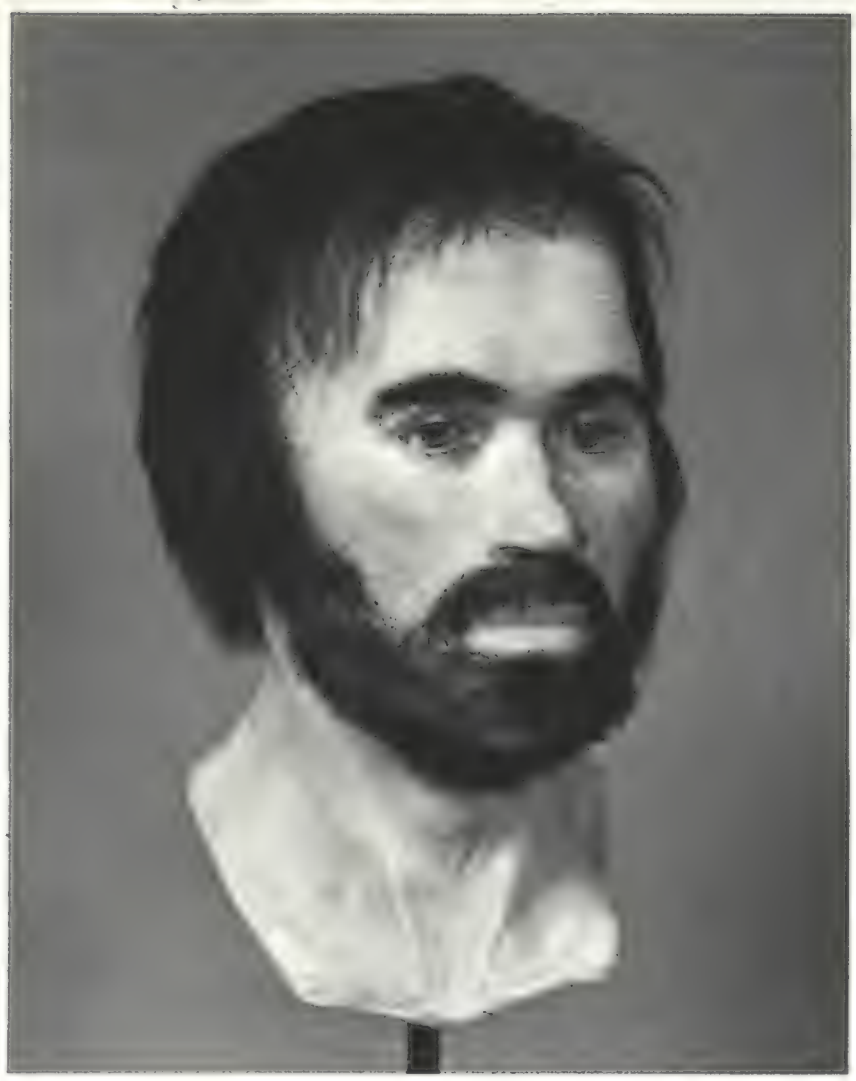
By Robert Wernick

What were Druids like, and was Lindow Man one?

A 2,000-year-old body from a British bog may be a Druid, but his sickle-wielding, awe-inspiring brethren remain mysterious



Scientifically reconstructed from the body opposite, Lindow Man wears a beard and a soulful look.

When some peat cutters turned up the naked body of a man in a bog at Lindow in Cheshire, they thought it might be a run-of-the-mill murder case. But by the time of the coroner's inquest, it was clear the remarkably preserved body was a good 2,000 years old. The death, though violent, was not murder. It seemed to be ritual. At least, there were no signs of a struggle. The victim had been struck twice on the back of the head, fracturing his skull, then garroted, breaking his neck. An incision had been made in the carotid artery, presumably to drain off his blood. And finally he had been thrown face down into a shallow pool and left in the kindly embrace of the slowly forming peat till he was dug up four years ago.

Scientists came in swarms to study Lindow Man, and with modern techniques they gradually learned a great deal about him. He was young, between 25 and 30, stocky (5 feet 5 inches, 160 pounds), powerfully muscled. He had been in perfect health until the moment when he was hit. He had even been given a last meal, consisting of what is now called bannock in Scotland, a flat griddle cake of barley, spiced with burnt heather and mistletoe pollen. Just such a cake was a traditional part of an old Celtic festival called Beltane, or May Day, still recalled in the countryside in Perthshire. One part of the bannock was seared, perhaps by a flaming stick, then broken up and distributed among the celebrants. Traces of blackening were found in the bannock in Lindow Man's stomach.

Assembled archaeologists and anthropologists wondered who Lindow Man could have been. If he lived in Britain in the second or third century B.C., they reasoned, he must have been an early Briton, and thus a Celt. Celtic society was rigidly stratified. He probably was not a peasant or herdsman because he seemed too well fed, too sleek; his nails were manicured, his hands uncalloused. Therefore he must have been a member of the noble class, perhaps a warrior.

Two scientists, Anne Ross and Don Robins, were dissatisfied with this theory. If he was a warrior, they argued, he would have been cutting and slashing with his heavy Celtic sword for more than a decade, and the muscles of his sword arm would be much more heavily developed than those of the other. But both sides of his body were perfectly symmetrical. And after all those years of cattle raids, duels and drunken mayhem that marked Celtic tribal society, he would surely have shown wounds, scars and scratches. Yet the skin of Lindow Man was whole, unblemished—just what is so often required of sacrificial victims in primitive religions.

The only possible answer, Ross and Robins have lately claimed, is that he belonged to quite another part of Celtic society. He was a Druid. If their hypothesis is accepted, it would make the finding of Lindow Man one of the most sensational archaeological discov-

Photographed following discovery in a Cheshire peat bog, Lindow Man was so well preserved that diggers thought he was a modern murder victim, but carbon dating fixed his death at 2,000 years ago.

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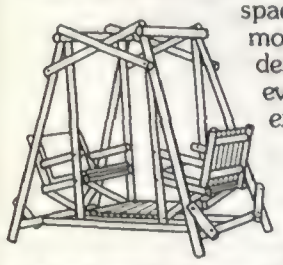

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Print shows human sacrifice, a grim ritual that was practiced by the Druids.

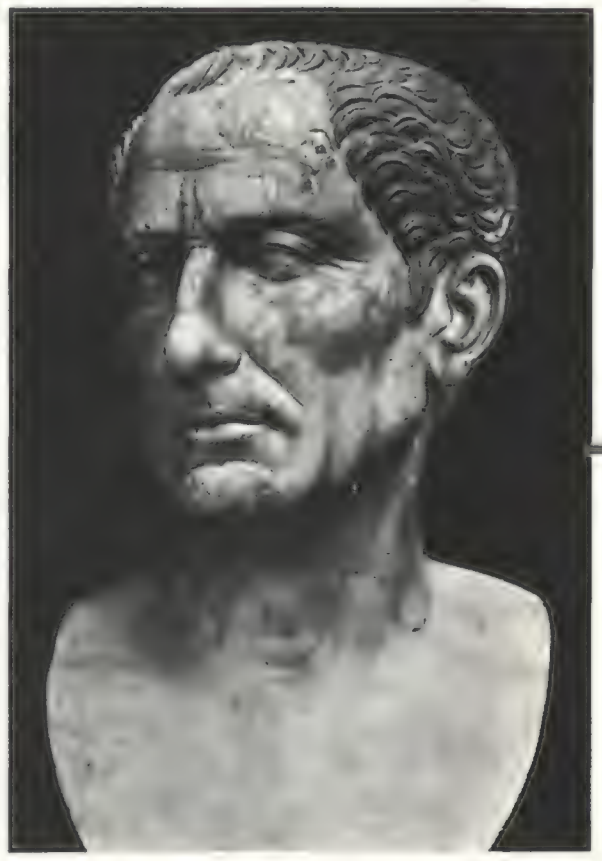
eries of all time. For it would mark the very first piece of physical evidence that has ever turned up of the ancient and mysterious religion of Druidism.

Druids have been so richly and romantically celebrated in song, story and even grand opera, that it comes as a surprise to realize how little in the humdrum way of fact is actually known about them. For instance, only one historical Druid is known to us by name, Diviciacus the Eduan, whom Julius Caesar employed around 50 B.C. as a roving ambassador and political cat's-paw in his conquest of Gaul. And we would not know that Diviciacus was a Druid at all had he not made a visit to Rome and had some philosophical conversations that later found their way into Cicero's letters.

The trouble with the Druids, from the point of view of people wanting to separate fact from romantic fantasy, is that they did not believe in written records. Like the *Rigveda* of ancient India (until it was written down by inquisitive Englishmen in the 18th century), all their tradition and learning were memorized and transmitted orally. What information we have about them has come from widely disparate and frequently unreliable sources. One is a scattering of references by Greek and Latin authors between the sixth century B.C. and the sixth century A.D. Another is an immense pile of predominantly ancient Irish epic poems and laws later written down with varying degrees of fidelity by Christian monks and scribes from the seventh century to the time of Queen Elizabeth I.

No classical sources except Caesar had any firsthand acquaintance with the Celtic society of which the Druids were a part. They wrote as outsiders, relying on travelers' tales when they weren't simply copying from the writings of others or embroidering on their own imaginings. They generally had an ax to grind, too.

Some were interested in portraying the Druids as cruel savages, addicted to hideous rites of human sacrifice. When Caesar reports that they built giant human figures of wicker, stuffed them with condemned criminals and set them ablaze, it does not necessarily mean he ever saw such a thing. The account would simply help convince the Roman public for whom he was writing that Caesar was pursuing a worthy cause in making war on such barbarous folk in Gaul, though Romans also performed human sacri-



Julius Caesar first wrote about Druids in his account of the Gallic Wars.

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fices. Other chroniclers, writing in the comfort of homes and libraries in Rome and Alexandria, were more interested in describing the Druids as noble savages, sages close to the living heart of nature, whose uncorrupted ways made such a shining contrast to the luxuries and pollutions of civilized Mediterranean man.

Neither school bothered to check the facts. Pliny the Elder gives a famous description of white-robed Druids cutting mistletoe off oaks with golden sickles by the light of the moon, which sounds lively and most realistic until you reflect that mistletoe almost never grows on oaks and that its tough bark would barely be scratched by a blade of gold.

The ancient Irish accounts, as they were eventually recorded, are equally unsatisfactory. Of course the original creators of the oral lore knew Druids intimately—they almost certainly were Druids themselves—so there was no reason to spell out the details about which we are so curious. In addition, the texts as we have them were written down and edited carefully by Christians proud of their ancestors but unable to bear the thought of them indulging in heathen practices. So all references to the ancient religion of the Celts were muddied, if not suppressed. Since the Druids were the priests of that religion, it means there are bound to be great gaps in any knowledge of them that manages to come through.

Still, it can be assumed that if something reported by a Roman writer like Caesar or Tacitus is also found in an Irish epic about early heroes, it is possible, perhaps likely, that we are getting some kind of accurate information.

Based on the little that can be sifted out, who then were the Druids?

In the noble words of the *Senchas Mar*, a compilation of old Irish laws, they were responsible for "the joint memory of the ancients, the transmis-

A frequent contributor, the author has recently written about Philip II of Spain, as well as Fra Angelico.

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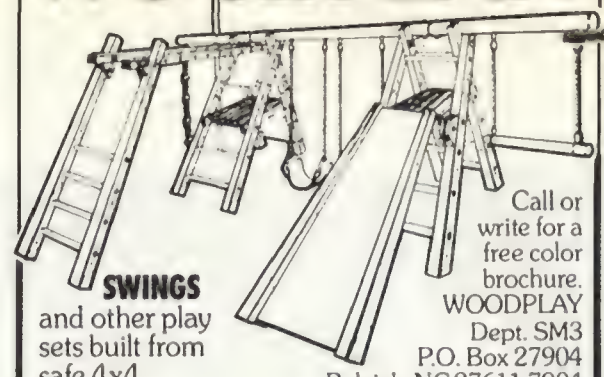

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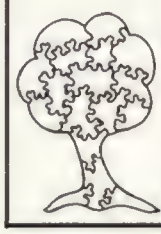

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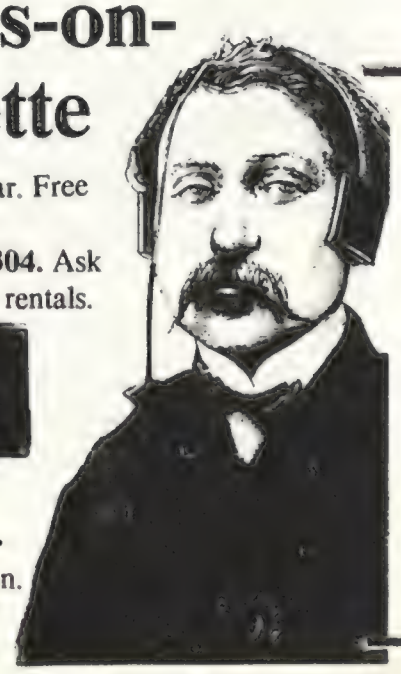

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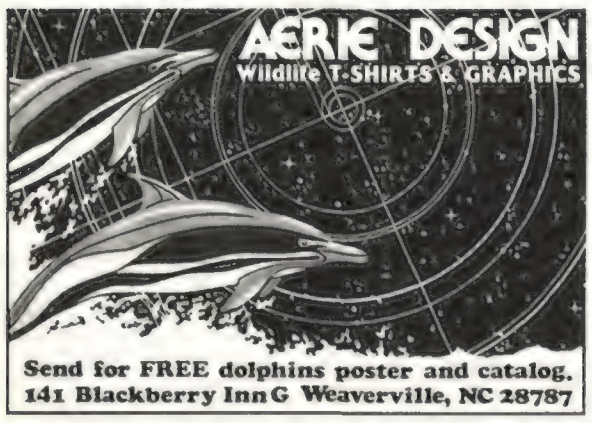

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sion from one ear to another, the chanting of the poets." They were in charge of all the spiritual, intellectual, ritual life of the people, inheritors and interpreters of the old laws and the old genealogies. They could provide the contact between mortals and their semidivine ancestors or supernatural beings like Irish Sidhe (pronounced Shee), who dwelt at the bottom of lakes or beyond the sea. They regulated and conducted the yearly ceremonies of Beltane, on the eve of May Day (the Celtic day, says Caesar, began at sundown), and Samain (pronounced Sahwen), the eve of the first of November when the months of darkness began, when the fighting season was over and the cattle were driven in from pasture to be slaughtered. Samain was a time of great carousing. It was a time when the spirits of the departed mingled with those of the living and the banshee (the female Sidhe) might appear among mortals in the form of a beautiful woman to lure heroes to the happy isles of the Other World. (Even in our pallid modern days, a touch of the Other World remains attached to Samain, which we now call Halloween.)

Druids might have many functions. They were priests and seers, studying, Caesar says, "the stars and their movements, the size of the Universe and the Earth, the nature of things, the power of the immortal gods." In addition, they might be judges or poets, magicians or physicians. They might not always have the medical skill of Fingen who, according to the *Cattle Raid of Cooley*, greatest of the Irish epics, believed he could diagnose a man's illness from the smoke rising from his house; or of the two skilled youths who provided the one-eyed gatekeeper of King Nuadh with an extra eye. (The gatekeeper, says the

Dark day for British Druids came in A.D. 61 when the Romans attacked Druidic center on the island of Mona, butchering all who resisted.

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Emperor Claudius abolished Druidism in Roman Gaul by decree in A.D. 54.

tale of *The Fate of the Children of Tuireann,* was both pleased and displeased because the new eye, a good keen-sighted eye, was also a cat's eye that opened every time a mouse stirred and ruined his sleep.)

But whatever their skills, in Celtic society Druids were figures of high rank. In Ireland, and presumably elsewhere, they chose the king out of the royal family. They sat at the king's right hand, and the king could not speak until his Druid had spoken first. They advised the king on affairs of state, interpreted the laws, passed judgments, chose between war and peace, even picking the hour when battles could be fought. Afterward no warrior or king could say he had won until a Druid had officially proclaimed him victor.

They were not a hereditary caste. Apparently anyone willing and able to spend the arduous years of study could become a Druid. In practice, however, this must have generally meant children of the warrior class. Druids could bear arms themselves; in many of the Irish epics they lead

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troops into battle. Cicero records that Diviciacus, invited to address the Roman Senate, insisted upon delivering his speech as a warrior might have, leaning on his shield.

But the chief Druidic weapons were spiritual. Druids had the immense prestige of a priestly caste, insuring that their orders were obeyed, their advice followed. If anyone dared to cross them, Druids could call down upon the person terrible maledictions against which no one could stand.

No Celt, that is. Tacitus has given a vivid account of the Roman attack, in A.D. 61, on Mona, now Anglesey, an island off the northwest coast of Wales. Refugees from all over Celtic Britain had gathered there to make a last stand against the Roman invaders

The Druids cut medicinal mistletoe, then called "all-heal," by moonlight.

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at a Druidic sanctuary of great antiquity. Suetonius Paulinus, the Roman general, launched his men in flat-bottomed boats, and as they approached Mona they could see the enemy drawn up in battle array on the shore. Then came hideous noises and flashings, and a host of Druids—long-bearded men and black-clad women—came leaping out of the woods, the men howling imprecations, the women rolling their eyes and waving torches though it was broad daylight. A Celtic army would have melted away instantly at the sight of such a concentration of malevolent forces. Even the hardened Roman soldiers, says Tacitus, were stupefied by the strangeness of the spectacle, their limbs as if paralyzed, until the general jumped ashore and barked at them not to be fools but to go about their business. Following him to the beach, they slaughtered everyone in their path and chopped down all the trees in the sacred groves. That was virtually the end of Druidic power in Britain.

The emperor Claudius had already crushed Druidism in Gaul. According to his biographer Suetonius Tranquillus, by a decree dated A.D. 54 he "completely abolished the barbarous and inhuman religion of the Druids." Until the Roman emperors converted to Christianity, Rome was ordinarily quite tolerant of the religious practices of conquered peoples, but the Druids were an exception. The Druids had too much political influence, they were too much a part of the wild, warring, tribal life that the Romans were determined to suppress, and so they got rid of the Druids quite ruthlessly, without even bothering to record how they did it.

After a couple of centuries of Roman rule, Druids had not only ceased to exist as a class, the very word had become debased to mean something like a gypsy fortune-teller. A late-Roman historian relates that Diocletian, stopping to spend the night at a country inn, found a "Druidess" there who prophesied that if he killed a wild

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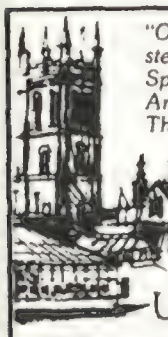

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boar he would become emperor. Sure enough, he later killed a general named Aper, Latin for boar, and in the course of time became one of Rome's greatest emperors.

While the Druids were suppressed on the Continent and in Britain, for a time they retained all their force and all their privileges in Ireland, where Rome never penetrated. Their great days ended there, too, in the fifth century, when the Irish were converted to Christianity by Saint Patrick. The Irish Druids were not physically exterminated. Instead, they yielded their ecclesiastical, ceremonial roles to the priests and monks of the new church, keeping their other functions under new names. Some of them became *brehons*, traveling jurists who could quote the ancient laws and settle disputes. Or they became *filid*—singular, *file*, a word that once meant seer but now came to mean poet. According to the *Ancient Laws of Ireland*, Saint Patrick forbade the *filid* to have anything to do with profane rites, that is, the Druidic religious practices, but allowed them to trace the genealogies of the men of Ireland, and to recite stories and poems. The highest rank of poet, the *ollaves*, had to know 350 ancient stories by heart. These are the principal stories that they told: "destructions, raids, courtships, combats, murders, battles, kidnappings, conflicts, feasts, sieges, adventures, violent deaths and pillages."

As long as Ireland remained Celtic and tribal, split up into several score of petty kingdoms, wandering *brehons* and *filid* kept alive fragments of the Druidic heritage. But when the English took over the country in the 16th century, like the Romans before them they wanted nothing to do with any tribal society. They wanted settled agricultural communities likely to pay their rents on time. As successive rebellions led to successive confiscations and the division of immense tracts of land among ambitious young English colonists, new landlords like Sir Humphrey Gilbert and

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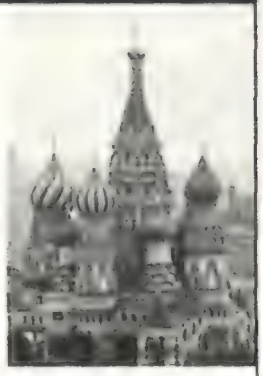

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Sir Walter Raleigh saw their most bitter enemies in the *brehons* and the poets, "fine fiery fellows with great rages when their temper's roused." They dealt with them nearly as savagely as the Romans had with the Druids in ancient Britain and Gaul. When the O'Neill of Tyrone surrendered in 1603 and English law was extended to the wild lands of Ulster, the last Druids passed from the scene. What little remained of Druidic tradition and learning could thenceforward be found only in folklore, buried in the tales told by wandering storytellers, or in a few monkish manuscripts.

Just as living Druidry was being exterminated by the English in Ireland, the English back home were beginning to develop a romantic interest in their own Druidical past. John Aubrey, the 17th-century antiquarian who was the first person to make a careful study of Stonehenge, recognized that it was far too old a monument to have been built by Romans or Danes, as other writers had suggested. He went back as far as the existing knowledge of history allowed him, ascribing it to the Celts, whom he described as a people "almost as savage as the beasts whose skins were their only raiment. . . . They were two or three degrees I suppose less savage than the Americans."

Lacking the tools of modern research, especially carbon dating, Aubrey could not have known that Stonehenge was built and rebuilt at least twice, many centuries before the Druids came to Britain from Europe with the Celtic invasions. Still, Aubrey's basic premise, later expanded to link Druids with Stonehenge, came to be accepted wisdom. To this day, popular imagination firmly places Druids in their white robes plumb in the middle of the giant trilithons. Ignoring Aubrey's unflattering opinions, later authors saw the Druids as guardians of ancient wisdom, as oak priests who had been with Abraham at the groves of Mamre in Palestine,

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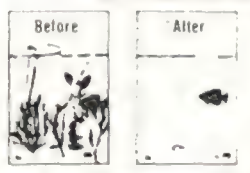

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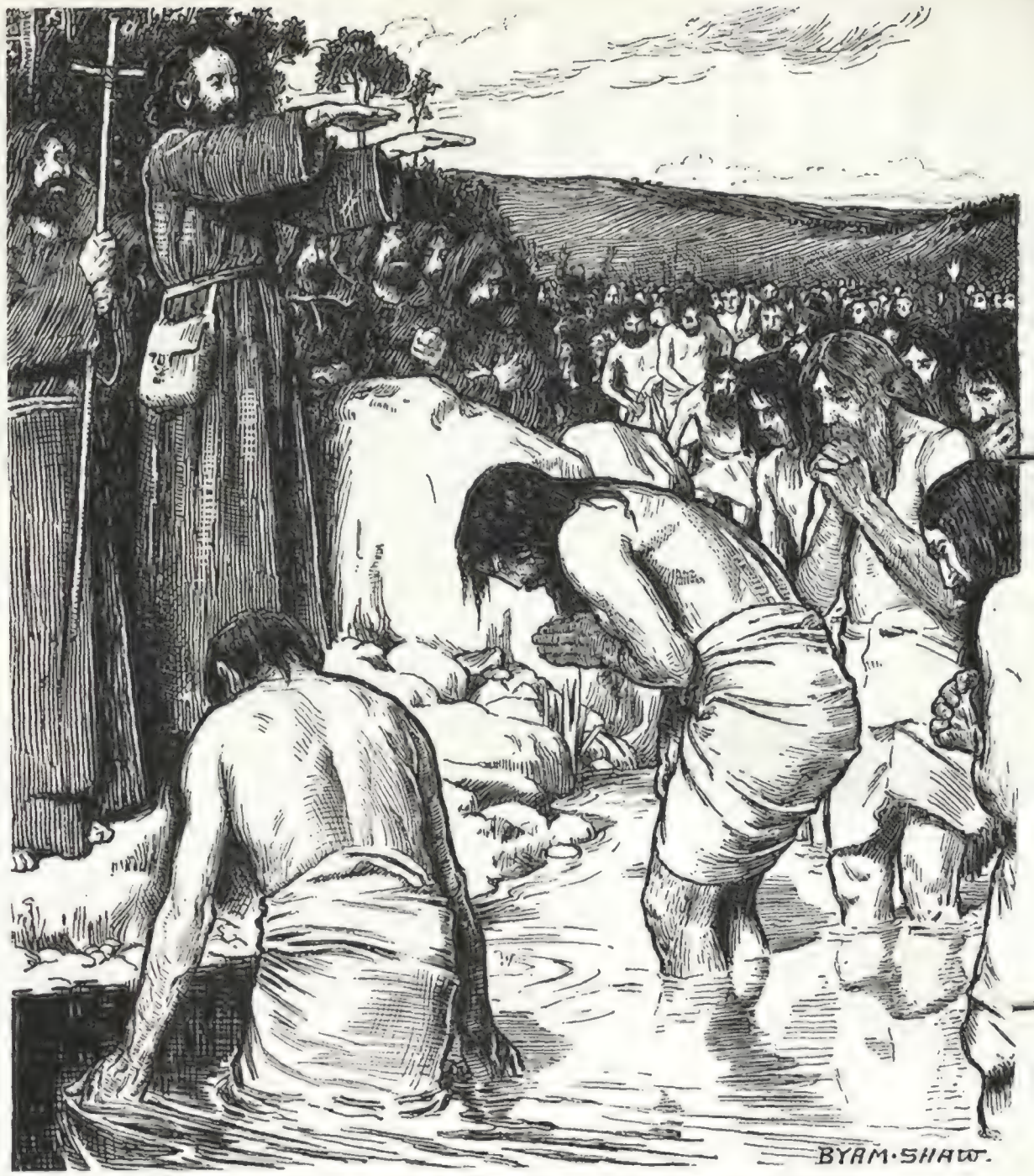

With Saint Patrick's mass baptism at Tara in the fifth century, Ireland was Christianized and influence of Druids began a sharp decline.

as flame keepers of the primal religion that God imparted to mankind at the Creation. "Your ancestors," wrote William Blake to his fellow Englishmen, "derived their origin from Abraham, Heber, Shem and Noah, who were Druids."

Blake was fortunate in being able to receive his information, as he said, at firsthand from the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel when they came to visit him in London. Others were troubled by the lack of texts. They were willing to assume that the Druids had inherited their wisdom from Abraham or the ancient Indian sages, but what did the wisdom actually consist of? Nobody had a clue.

One typically fanciful answer was provided by Edward Williams, a stonemason working in London, who Welshified his name to Iolo Morganwg. Williams was a learned man with considerable knowledge of the Old Welsh language and literature. He had acquired some ancient manuscripts attributed to the sixth-century bard Taliesin (but undoubtedly written down many centuries later). The verses must have been obscure enough to begin with—as early as the first century B.C. the Roman author Diodorus Siculus had noted the Celtic taste for "enigma and mystification"—and successive copying had badly corrupted the text. A lesser man might have

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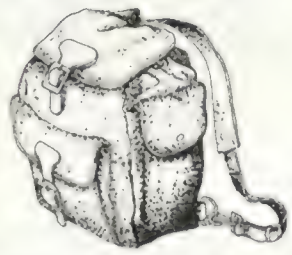

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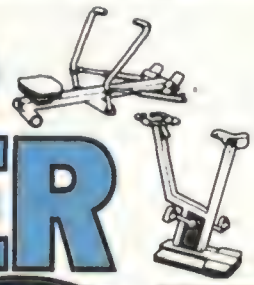

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contented himself with bewailing the loss of so much ancient lore. Morganwg manfully set about to make up for the loss, more or less out of whole cloth. He wrote a complete corpus of ancient Welsh literature, describing the history, beliefs and poetical practices of the Druids, and did it so skillfully that his manuscripts were not recognized as fakes until generations after his death.

On September 23, 1792, the day of the autumnal equinox, Morganwg led a group of Welsh bards to a spot on Primrose Hill in London. Pulling some stones out of his pocket he made a circle, and in the middle of it he placed another stone described as a *maen gorsedd*, or altar, "on which a naked sword being placed, all the bards assisted to sheath it."

Morganwg's Gorsedd ceremony was to become an immense success. In 1819 it found its way into the traditional Welsh festival of the Eisteddfod, in which poets recite verses on traditional themes in traditional patterns, and it has remained there ever since. These days the Gorsedd is performed under the aegis of a benevolent gentleman calling himself an arch-Druid, dressed in a white robe and pseudo-Celtic bits of metalware derived from Morganwg's texts: a scepter, a sword, a crown, a hirlas horn, a *dwyfronneg yr Archderwydd* (which is a copy of a late Bronze Age Irish breastplate).

Such ceremonies popularized throughout the world the idea of the Druid as something old and wise and vaguely mysterious. When, in *Evangeline*, Longfellow wanted to make his murmuring pines and hemlocks appropriately hoary and ominous, he had them bearded with moss "like the Druids of old." When Bellini wanted a murky, primordial setting for the drama of love betrayed and life sacrificed in his opera *Norma*, he made the heroine a Druidess. At the conclusion of *Finnegans Wake*, in a scene symbolizing the fading of the richly tumultuous world of dreams into pallid rational everyday life, James Joyce

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had Saint Patrick confounding the arch-Druid Balkelly in a debate before the high king Leary at Tara. Druids appear toting golden sickles and brewing magical potions in the current (and sophisticated) French comic strip *Astérix le Gaulois*.

On a more formal level, we have the Druidic Order of the Universal Bond claiming (no documents have survived) to have been founded at the Apple Tree Tavern in Covent Garden in 1717, its members the inheritors of a Divine Light that had "its earliest homes in the Island continents, Atlantis and Lemuria, that have now vanished beneath the waves." These are the people who congregate at Stonehenge every Midsummer's Eve, wearing white robes over ordinary clothes, to conduct a ceremony of invocation to beneficent spirits.

They are not the only keepers of the flame. Stonehenge ceremonies have been enlivened or disrupted in recent years by hippies, whose rock concerts, drug parties and miscellaneous hooliganism have led to a fencing off of the shrine. Attendance at the Midsummer activities has lately been limited to Druids who have written to the National Trust for tickets.

Unlike the bland and benignant British, Continental Druids tend to be secretive, and are reported to perform black magic. In Brittany, they have

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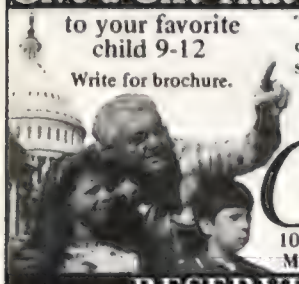

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connections with Breton separatist movements and sometimes attract attention by blowing up television towers to keep the Celtic land untainted by the French language, fruit of the hated Roman invasion. Germany is said to have neo-Nazi Druids.

Naturally, contemporary America is not to be outdone. We have Druids in cities, university towns and wilderness areas. The first organized group, the Reformed Druids of North America, has spawned a schismatic fringe calling itself the New Reformed Druids of North America.

Those powerful ancient sages deserve better than such stale, vaudeville spiritualism. It is useless to look for ancient Druidic learning, of course. It is all gone. But some flickerings of the old fire can turn up in modern Irish literature. *Finnegans Wake*, meant to be read in so many different ways, can be interpreted as the collective dream of a mystic college of Druids on a particularly misty Samain, with the beer flowing freely from the abodes of the Sidhe.

And the poetical curse, the *glam dicinn*, that favorite weapon of ancient Druids, has lived on. It is surely the Druidic inheritance that gives the sharp, rollicking rancor to the lines that playwright John Millington Synge wrote and dedicated to a lady who had disapproved of his *Playboy of the Western World*:

> Lord confound this surly sister,
> Blight her brow with blotch
> and blister,
> Cramp her larynx, lung and liver,
> In her guts a galling give her.
>
> Let her live to earn her dinners
> In Mountjoy with seedy sinners;
> Lord this judgment quickly bring,
> And I'm your servant, J.M. Synge.

It was a good thing for this sister that she lived in the 20th century when poets like Synge are mild-mannered gentlemen who rarely break bones. If she had lived in the long ago, in the Elfth century, she might have shared the fate of Luaine, bride of King Conchobar of Ulster. When this unfortunate queen spurned the amorous advances of the Druid Aithirne Ailgesach and his two sons, Cuingedach and Apartach, they composed a triple *glam dicinn* against her. Three huge boils, one black, one red, one white, thereupon appeared on her cheek and she died of shame.

Self-styled Druids still celebrate summer solstice at Stonehenge, a site for centuries erroneously associated with Druidism.

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Book reviews

The Songlines
Bruce Chatwin
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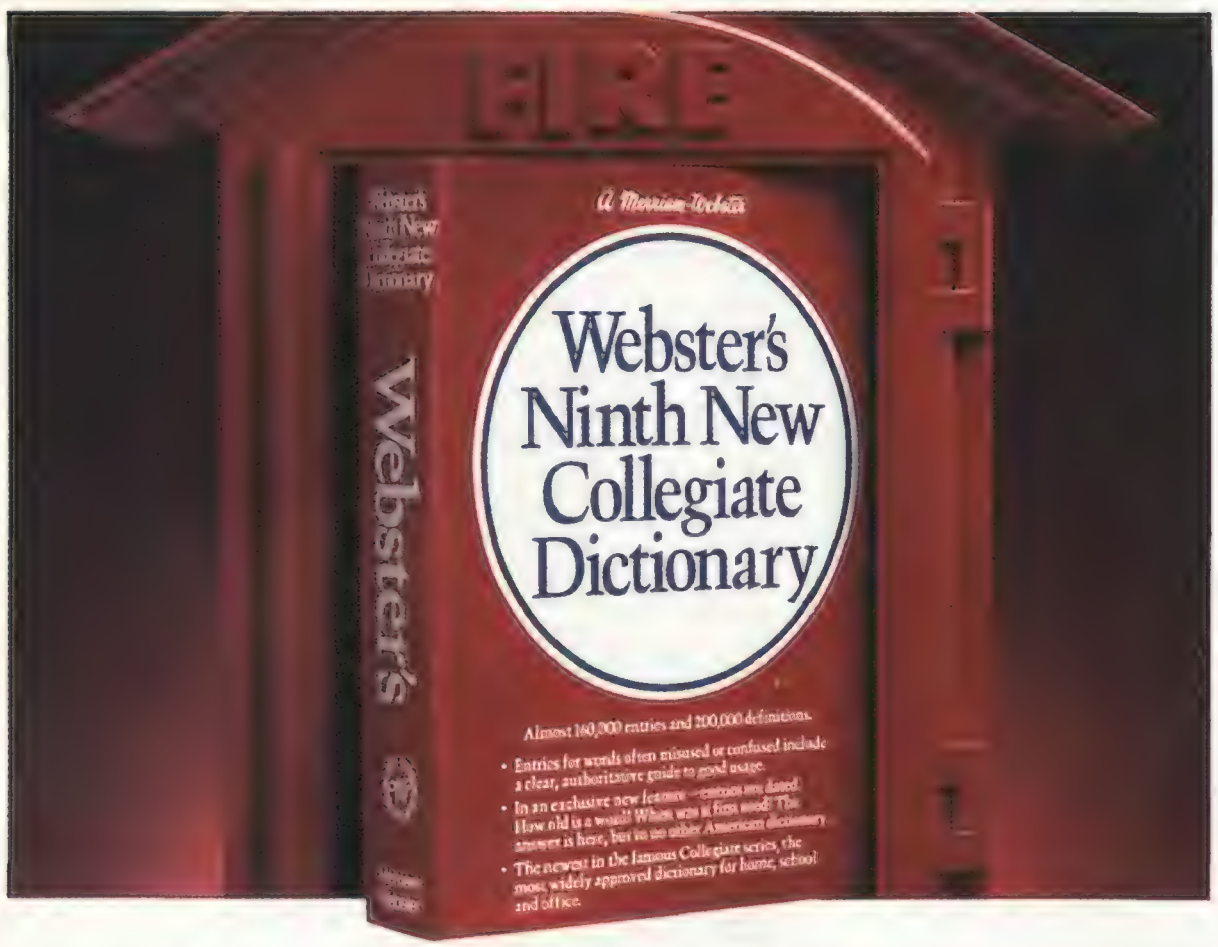
Bruce Chatwin first made his name with *In Patagonia*, less a travel journal than a book of wonders, a kind of South American magic nonfiction bristling with old sea dogs and bank robbers (Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, no less), revolutionaries and concert pianists, prehistoric monsters and modern dictators. All these took on extraordinary vivacity because of Chatwin's prose: sinewy sentences, short paragraphs, a painterly feel for place, and a dryly ironic tone that turns observation into aphorism.

In his next books, *The Viceroy of Ouidah* and *On the Black Hill*, Chatwin turned respectively to the imaginative reconstruction of a Brazilian slaver's adventures in Dahomey and a pastoral novel about two Welsh brothers. Both were well received, but many readers hungered for something more personal. Now they have it in *The Songlines*, Chatwin's account of a month or so spent in Australia trying to understand the mystical system by which aboriginals make their way across the outback.

As usual in travel literature, the book's pleasure arises less from its announced purpose than from the characters met along the way. Out in the desert a tough police inspector pumps iron and reads Spinoza's *Ethics* for fun. A seemingly primitive aboriginal painter, offered a few hundred dollars for a canvas, unexpectedly demands $6,000—the dealer feigns shock until the artist says, "Well why are you asking seven . . . thousand dollars for one of my paintings in your . . . exhibition in Adelaide?" A randy old political activist intones a passage from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Marx as grace before meals. Another aboriginal, a foundling given the name Flynn, becomes a Catholic priest, studies theology in Rome, then returns to Australia to head up a mission. Once home, he goes native with a vengeance, enlists in radical politics and eventually takes up with a girl named Goldie—but only after writing a letter "in faultless Latin," requesting the Pope to excuse him from his vows. Only in Australia.

Not everyone Chatwin meets is so cultivated: the outback spits up a fair number of Snopes-like barflies and aboriginals who run down kangaroos for kicks. Nevertheless, the overwhelming Australian geography seems able to absorb all these—the good, the bad and the ugly—into a shimmering landscape of heat and emptiness, where Perenty lizards grow to eight-foot lengths and a mound or rock may prove a sacred site.

It is this desert world that particularly obsesses Chatwin as he tries to understand the "question of questions: the nature of human restlessness."

"What I learned—in some 20 years as a modern nomad through Africa, Asia, South America and Australia—seemed to confirm the conjecture I had toyed with for so long: that Natural Selection has designed us—from the structure of our brain-cells to the structure of our big toe—for a career of seasonal journeys *on foot* through a blistering land of thorn-scrub or desert.

"If this were so; if the desert were 'home'; if our instincts were forged in the desert; to survive the rigours of the desert—then it is easier to understand why greener pastures pall on us; why possessions exhaust us, and why Pascal's imaginary man found his comfortable lodgings a prison."

Such philosophizing about Man's soul recurs in the later pages of *The Songlines* and may seem like padding to readers looking for sheer story. But Chatwin has devoted his life to a kind of Grail quest, hoping to prove—by study and direct experience with primitive peoples—that human nature is essentially gentle and defensive, rather than vicious or aggressive. Man is a pilgrim, not a predator.

One may or may not be persuaded to this viewpoint. But Chatwin's delicious prose leaves no doubt that the British—from Robert Byron and Freya Stark to Eric Newby and Jan Morris—remain the masters of modern travel writing.

Michael Dirda
Editor for *Washington Post Book World*

The Peacocks of Baboquivari
Erma J. Fisk
Norton, $7.95 (paper)

Birds, to me, are of minimal interest. My thoughts on them are these: some are audible, some are edible. I think of the latter more often than the former. Still, some people are as passionate about birds as I am about things that interest me. And *that* is interesting.

Erma J. Fisk is passionate about birds. "Not a birder until midlife" and "not a real ornithologist, just a pseudo," and not an omniscient mistress of nature ("I wouldn't know a hackberry from an elm"), she has worked for some years with the Nature Conservancy, a "national conservation organization committed to preserving natural diversity by finding and protecting areas that contain the best samples of all components of the natural world."

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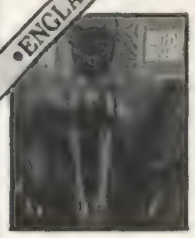
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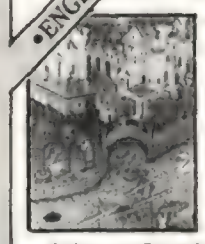
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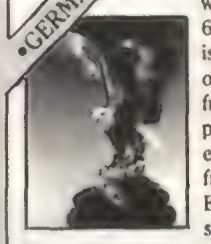
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For Fisk, this means banding birds—going to some remote locale, setting up nets, trapping the birds, affixing engraved anklets to them, then releasing them in the hope that someone will trap the same birds again and gather data on their habits and migrations.

In the winter of 1978, Fisk, at age 73, spent six months, more or less alone, on an abandoned ranch high in those hills you see off to your right as you drive through the desert from Tucson to Nogales. The highest peak there is called Baboquivari and the local Papago Indians believe, reasonably, that it is the home of their tribal gods. The peacocks in the title of Fisk's journal of thoughts and adventures are not native there. They were imported by a former resident and have now grown wild.

In truth, there is more in this book about those blasted peacocks—noisy, dirty birds, thumping on the roof, wrecking the cabin when they can sneak in—than about the Oregon juncos, Mexican jays, black-chinned sparrows, ruby-crowned kinglets and other varieties that blunder into Fisk's nets. She writes passionately about birds and the need to study them, but this is a personal journal, not a treatise; her conservatory purpose is served not by a display of facts, but by the strength of her commitment.

Even so, during that stay in the mountains Fisk thought and learned much more about herself, about human nature and about Man's relationship to the grand scheme of things than about birds. Start with birds, she suggests, or *anything*, and a thoughtful person ends up thinking about Man and nature.

"What is the urge," she wonders near the end of her adventure, "that makes people—me—want to climb every hill in sight? To get away from a prosaic daily round? . . . To put those daily rounds in perspective, to look from a distance at life in the hope of seeing a pattern. . . ?" And, she wonders further, "Who is ever contented?" She confides, "I hadn't expected to live this long. Years ago I decided that sixty was old enough, but I have gone on and on and on." So, I expect, will this book.

To me, perhaps the most endearing thing about *Peacocks* is a note on the back cover: "Erma J. Fisk's latest book is *A Birdwatcher's Cookbook.*"

Some of them, after all, *are* edible. And Erma Fisk knows it.

Alan Ryan
Travel writer and novelist

A House of Trees: Memoirs of an Australian Girlhood
Joan Colebrook
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $18.95

In the preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus,* Joseph Conrad describes his creative task as that of trying "by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you *see.* That—and no more, and it is everything."

This is what Joan Colebrook achieves in these memoirs. She writes superbly about her childhood in the rain forests of northern Queensland and about the Australia she left 50 years ago. It is a remarkably sensuous book, with smells and sights so keenly described that the reader is transported to the author's "Garden of Eden" with very little effort. We see this natural world through her eyes, and it is everything.

As a young child, Joan Colebrook learned to admire the aboriginals' ability to live harmoniously with nature, their "jungle sensibility." She writes: "And we . . . felt a similar sense of identification, when the jungles spangled with light or dark, with rain and mist, seemed linked to the past life that we no longer knew, and accepted us between the pillars of great trunks into what seemed temples, smelling eternally of sweet leaves and of the disintegration of wood."

Her exhilaration with her environment draws the reader into her world and we begin to understand how Colebrook's parents raised five daughters and a son in the middle of nowhere. "There were other sensations of joy and they all seemed to be related to that physical body, pressed toward danger and exultation, so that in this perilous effort the self could be forgotten and time could stretch out and become a satisfactory continuum. . . . the acceptance instinctive to childhood told us that everything had still to happen—that we lived in a bell of creation, which if tapped gently would ring forever."

Colebrook's powerful recollections include descriptions of the politics and economics of a nation on the move. Her father's political involvement is set against the Australia of his youth, with the rise of the labor movement in the 1880s, and the federation of territories in 1901 that made Australia a Commonwealth rather than a colony. His unsuccessful campaign for a seat in Parliament did not end his search for fair treatment of farmers or his lessons of fair play for his children. Australia is the land of the second chance, young Joan and her siblings were taught, and the national currency of success is skill, not lineage.

Here a theme common to Australian culture is introduced: eschewing Englishness. The author toys with it in an amusing and gentle way, but the thrust is there. "We sensed, perhaps, that the destructive side of our activities could not be debated, for although we were British we were Australian first, and to be Australian meant that one had to survive. The whole 'English thing' as seen from the sultry Australian schoolrooms, that sense of ordered and thoughtful beauty in cottage gardens as in noble estates, that 'manageability,' was foreign to us."

Even so, as her own future evolves, much of the young Joan's "jungle sensibility" is alloyed with English influences

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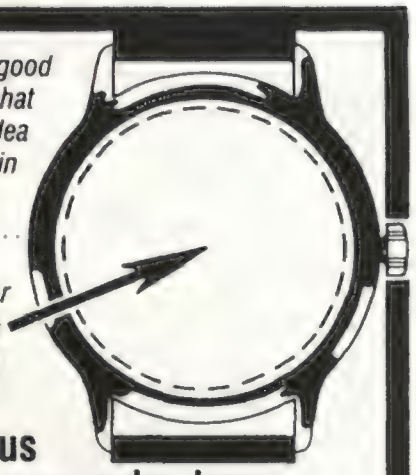

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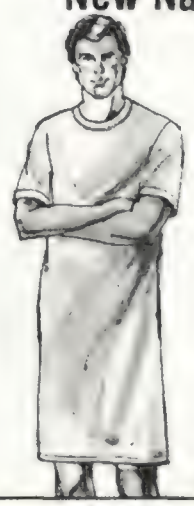

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and we are made aware of her struggle to place herself in two cultures. As do so many of her countrymen, she considers warily the influences of city life and treats them with ambiguous disdain.

Such sentiments are familiar to readers of Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* and other Australian works that portray the dilemma of a people isolated and shaped by a geography totally alien to their heritage. Yet this land, the world's largest island and smallest continent, inspires a ferocious chauvinism.

Although the author says that the "particular Australian essence is hard to describe," she manages to do it very well: "it has in it both a sweetness and a terrible desiccation, a nothingness and a rocklike reality. Australia is a place where the stars seem to hang low, and where men feel close to a long-ago spinning of the planets. If this heightens human endurance, it also makes demands upon human strength."

Although Colebrook's lyrical narrative stops with her early marriage and motherhood, one senses that her childhood, so redolent of essential truths and natural beauty, did not prepare her for other, stranger jungles.

Jill D. Brett
Washington, D.C. writer

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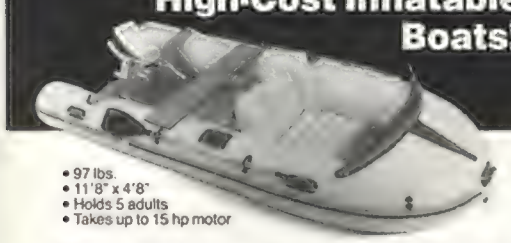

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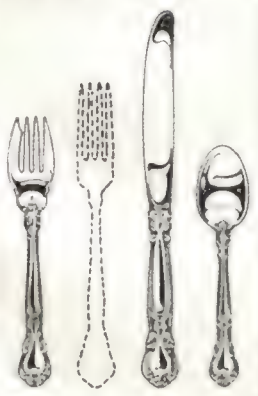

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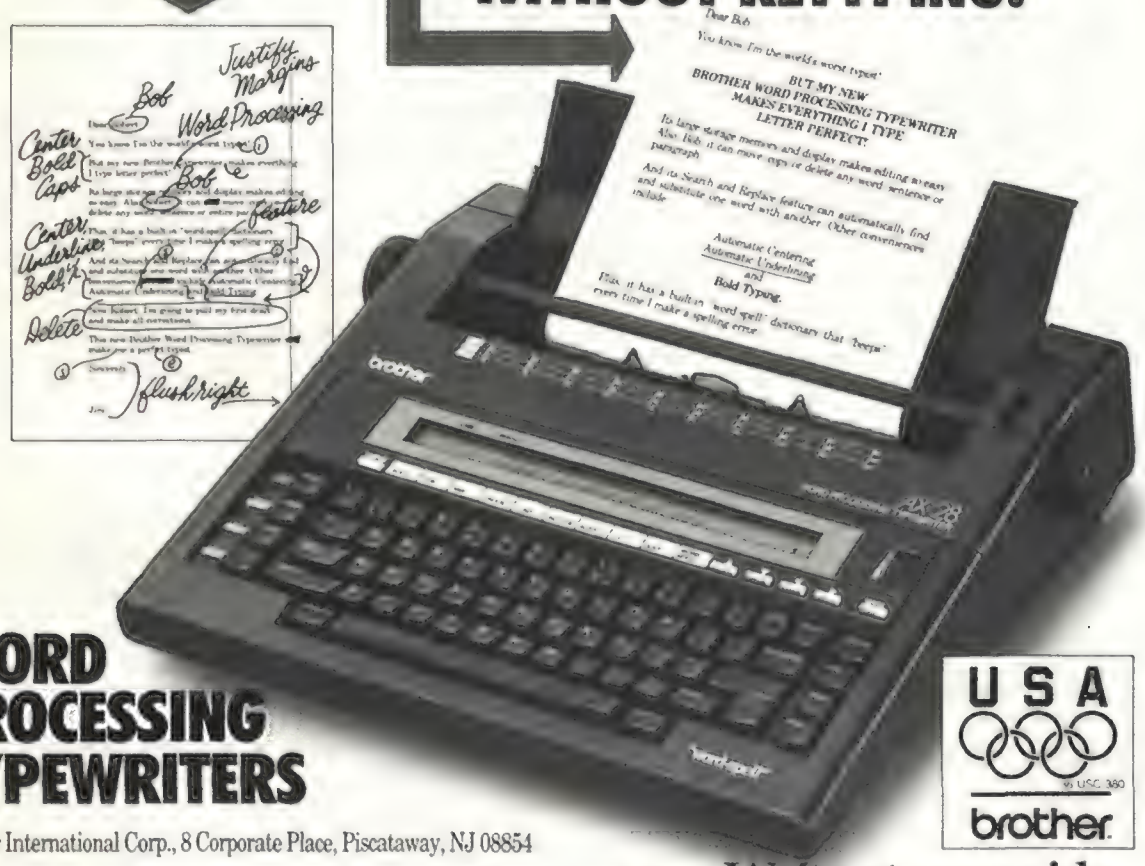

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W.H. O'Gara and Ora A. Clement, Union College Press (Lincoln, Nebraska), 1947

Country music (p. 84)

The 1988 Chamber of Commerce Nashville Travel Guide, Guide Company (Nashville), 1988

Nashville: Music City USA by John Lomax III, Harry N. Abrams, 1985

The Country Music Book, edited by Michael Mason, Scribner's, 1985

You're so Cold I'm Turnin' Blue by Martha Hume, Viking, 1982

Red wolves (p. 100)

"Red wolf in the wilderness" by Jeffrey P. Cohn, *BioScience*, May 1987

Status Summary: The Red Wolf (Canis rufus) by Curtis J. Carley, Endangered Species Report 7, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1979

The Wolf by L. David Mech, University of Minnesota Press, 1981

"A Wolf in the Eye" by Peter Steinhart, *Audubon*, January 1988

Butler school (p. 110)

Pray Silence: A Toastmaster's Story by Ivor Spencer, Robert Hale (London), 1975

"New Texas School: Making Man Into Manservant" by Wayne King, *New York Times*, September 3, 1984

The World of Jeeves by P. G. Wodehouse, Herbert Jenkins (London), 1967

Newberry Library (p. 124)

Humanities' Mirror: Reading at the Newberry, 1887-1987, compiled and edited by Rolf Achilles, Newberry Library, 1987

An Uncommon Collection of Uncommon Collections: The Newberry Library by Lawrence W. Towner, Newberry Library, 1985

"The Newberry Library: Making the Past Come Alive" by Jeff Lyon, *Sunday: The Chicago Tribune Magazine*, November 29, 1987

Computer art (p. 138)

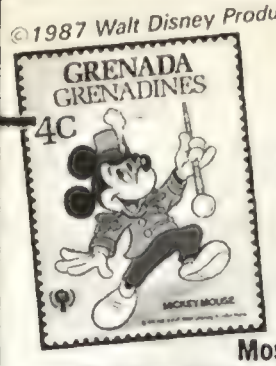
The Art of David Em: One Hundred Computer Paintings, Harry N. Abrams, 1988

Druids (p. 146)

The Celts by Thomas G.E. Powell, Thames and Hudson (London), 1980

The Druids by Stuart Piggott, Frederick A. Praeger (New York), 1968

Drawing Down the Moon by Margot Adler, Beacon Press (Boston), 1986



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Smithsonian highlights

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Special March exhibits and events

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
In Praise of Ancestors: Ritual Objects from China (through 1988) Extensive collection highlights bronzes and jades. *Monsters, Myths and Minerals* (through 1988) Animal imagery in 123 pieces.

National Museum of African Art
African Art in the Cycle of Life (through March 20) Sub-Saharan masterworks. *Royal Benin Art in the Collection of the National Museum of African Art* (runs indefinitely) Traditional court art.

National Air and Space Museum
Voyager: Around the World Without a Pit Stop (runs indefinitely) Exhibition of record-breaking aircraft.

National Museum of Natural History
King Herod's Dream: Caesarea on the Sea (March 23-June 19) More than 200 objects from six major historical periods trace the archaeological and historical significance of Israel's renowned harbor city from its construction in 22 B.C. to its demise in A.D. 1296.

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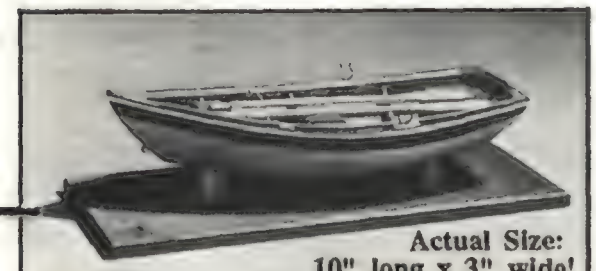

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National Museum of American Art
City Life: Photographs by Bruce Davidson (March 4-June 19) Three series—"East 100th Street," "The Cafeteria" and "Subway"—are shown together for the first time.

Renwick Gallery
American Art Pottery, 1880-1930, from the Cooper-Hewitt Museum (March 25-October 23) Seventy-five pieces representing the historical and esthetic development of the American art pottery movement.

National Portrait Gallery
The Artist's Mother: Portraits and Homages (March 26-June 5) Works in varied media by some of the most influential artists of 20th century, including George Bellows, David Hockney and Marisol.

Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden
Directions—Sherrie Levine (March 9-May 30) Ready-made materials and patterns predominate in these paintings from two of artist's most recent series.
Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler Works (March 9-May 30) Site-specific temporary installation.

Anacostia Museum
Climbing Jacob's Ladder: the Rise of Black Churches in Eastern American Cities 1740-1877 (through March 20) One hundred fifty illustrations and artifacts.

Cooper-Hewitt Museum (New York)
The Triumph of Simplicity: 350 Years of Swedish Silver (March 1-June 7) The art of Swedish silversmiths from the 17th century to the present.

Symposiums and Conferences

Afro-Americans and the Evolution of a Living Constitution (March 15-16) Sponsored by the Smithsonian and the Joint Center for Political Studies, two-day symposium highlights the achievements of Afro-Americans and other minority communities in shaping the living legacy of the Constitution. Speakers will include Mary Frances Berry, John Hope Franklin, David J. Garrow, Charles V. Hamilton, Representative Don Edwards and others. For further information, call Office of Interdisciplinary Studies, 357-2328 or 357-2047.

Women and the Constitution: 200 Years (April 15-16) Special conference, co-sponsored by the National Museum of American History and American Uni-

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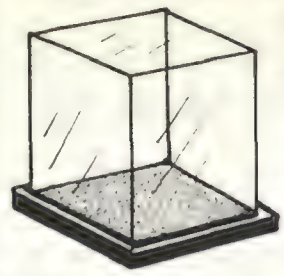

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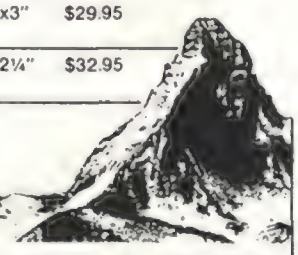

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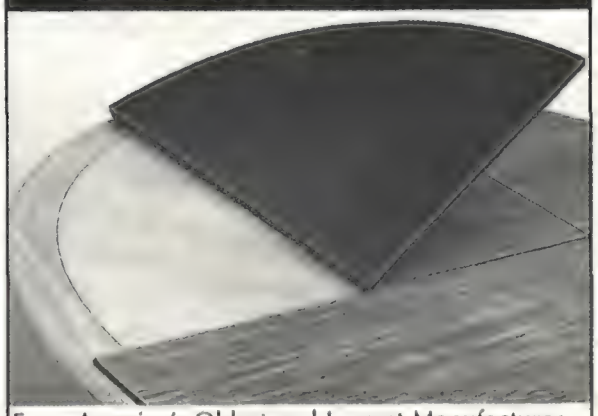

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Musical Weekend

Highlights of the 16th Musical Weekend, April 29, 30 and May 1, will include a performance by the National Symphony Orchestra with Mstislav Rostropovich; dinners at the Renwick Gallery and the grand concourse of the new Quadrangle museum complex; and a champagne breakfast at the National Zoo. Write Musical Weekend, NMAH Room 4124, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.

Lecture and Seminar Program

Residents of Baton Rouge will be treated to a special series of lectures when the program visits that city March 4-6. Presented by Smithsonian curators, the series will feature a wide range of topics including Abstract Expressionist painting, astronomy, the fate of the tropical rain forest, and a special seminar on historic preservation.

Associates in Baton Rouge should have received brochure-invitations for the series by this time. For information, write Lecture and Seminar Program, 1100 Jefferson Drive, S.W., Room 3045, Washington, D.C., 20560, or call (202) 357-1350.

Exhibition catalogs

Catalogs available at this time include:

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Resident Associate Program

To become a Resident Associate, or for fee and ticket information, call 357-3030. Here are some March events:

The Power and the Glory: Piano Masterpieces from Mozart to Ravel (March 6, April 24, June 19; 7 P.M.) Pianist Menahem Pressler presents series of three "informances."

The Phantom of the Opera (March 7; 8 P.M.) British critic Sheridan Morley discusses development of Phantom story.

Festival of Australian Cinema (March 22, 29, April 5, 12, 19; 8 P.M.) Washington premieres of five recent films.

22nd Annual Kite Festival (March 26; 10 A.M.; rain date, March 27) A springtime tradition—fun for everyone.

Pro Musicis Presents Shauna Rolston (March 27; 7 P.M.) Canadian cellist in virtuosic concert.

Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service

SITES circulates exhibitions to hundreds of cities outside the Washington area. To sponsor one of the shows in your community, write SITES, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. 20560. Here are some March exhibits:

Davenport, Iowa (March 19-April 17) *Art and the Science of Botany,* Putnam Museum.

Las Vegas (March 12-April 24) *Tracks in the Sky: Wildlife and Wetlands on the Pacific Flyway,* Museum of Natural History.

Longmont, Colorado (March 12-April 10) *Perfect in Her Place: Women at Work in Industrial America,* Longmont Museum.

Midland, Michigan (March 12-April 24) *Community Industries of the Shakers,* Midland County Historical Society.

San Francisco (March 12-April 17) *Italy: One Hundred Years of Photography,* Museo Italo-Americano.

Smithsonian Seminars

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American Antique Furniture
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Printing from Nature
Learn the fine techniques of printing directly from natural objects during hands-on workshops with noted artist F.G. Hochberg.

Photojournalism
Smithsonian photographers and guest experts introduce you to the fundamentals as you document life in Washington.

Adventures in Archaeology
Tour the exhibition "Caesarea on the Sea" and enjoy lectures by archaeologists who have excavated this remarkable city.

Crosscurrents in European Art
Study the painting and sculpture of 19th-century France and other European nations with art historian William Kloss.

University of Southern Mississippi
May 17-20
Enjoy Southern hospitality in a college setting during seminars in Hattiesburg.

The Art and Craft of Creative Writing
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What's new at the Zoo?

What weighs a little more than an ounce, measures about eight inches in length, has rough, scaly skin and is hatched from an egg? And what native of Patagonia is monogamous, an outstanding digger and can walk soon after it's born? The correct answers are: a newly hatched dwarf caiman and a mara, in that order.

The dwarf caiman below was one of five hatched late last year at our National Zoo. A rare species of New World crocodilian, it was the first produced here and one of the first hatched in captivity anywhere in the world. The mara, unlike the other animals pictured here, is neither rare nor endangered. A type of rodent, it does, however, represent a new species for the Zoo, and officials hope to acquire a mate for this adult male soon.

The Zoo's commitment to rare and endangered species has met with royal success. Last July it was given two female greater one-horned rhinos by the King of Nepal in gratitude for the work the Smithsonian has been doing with that species in his country (SMITHSONIAN, September 1987).

A real coup for the Zoo was the first birth in captivity in North America of a golden-headed tamarin, a subspecies of the golden lion tamarins that are also being bred here.

When you visit the Zoo next time, be sure to check in with our friends below.
Diane M. Bolz

Keeper Kathy Wallace feeds new one-horned rhinos, still just juveniles; it's hoped in time they will breed with Zoo's resident male.

The striking golden-headed tamarin is even rarer than the golden lion tamarin.

Dwarf caiman (above) was one of three hatchlings that survived. Mara (left) has long, antelopelike legs and is a capable jumper.

"Still–in a way–nobody sees a flower–really–
it is so small–we haven't time–
and to see takes time, like to have a friend takes time."
—Georgia O'Keeffe

Red Poppy, 1927 *Oil on canvas 7" × 9", Private collection, Geneva*

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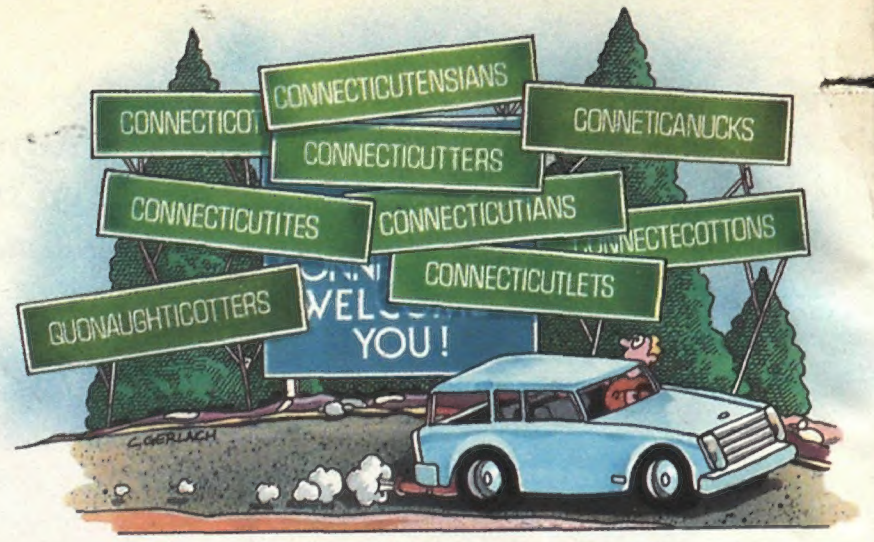
By Paul Dickson



For a domunym, there's no place like homonym

Over time I have learned that people are quite concerned about what other people call them. Call someone from Indiana an Indianan or Indianian and you will be informed in no uncertain terms about the word Hoosier. North Carolinian is often acceptable, but not to diehard Tarheels. In Utah, the folks prefer Utahn over Utahan. Phoenicians live in antiquity—and in Arizona—while Columbians are from South Carolina, not the District of Columbia, where Washingtonians reside. Those Washingtonians are not to be mistaken for the Washingtonians who cluster around Puget Sound.

Though this seems confusing, there is a modicum—but no more than a modicum—of order in this realm. Years ago George R. Stewart jr., author of *Names on the Land*, outlined a set of principles for such derivatives. If the name of the place ends in *-a* or *-ia*, an *n* should be added; if it ends in *-on*, add *-ian*; if it ends in *-i*, add *-an*; if it ends in *-o*, add *-an*; and if it ends in *-y*, change the *y* to an *i* and add *-an*.

I hope all that is quite clear because Stewart had more. To wit, if the place name ends in a sounded *e*, *-an* is added; if it ends in *-olis*, this becomes *-olitan*; and if the name ends with a consonant or a silent *e*, either *-ite* or *-er* is added.

These rules work in many cases, most of them familiar—Philadelphian, New Yorker, Tacoman, Rhode Islander—some not so—i.e., Kansas Citian, Annapolitan. But they also make Albanians out of citizens of Albany, New York, and Little Rockers out of urban Arkansans (or, as some insist, Arkansawyers). Naturally there are many, many exceptions, as it seems that people often like to decide for themselves whether they will be called Angelenos (dwellers in Los Angeles) and Haligonians (denizens of Halifax, Nova Scotia).

In this matter, North Americans are not the only unruly citizens. The British Isles are populated by the likes of Liverpudlians, Oxonians, Dundonians, Mancunians and Cestrians (who hail, respectively, from the cities of Liverpool, Oxford, Dundee, Manchester and Chester). Residents of the Isle of Man are Manx, a term equally applied to men, women and cats. Moving eastward there seems to be an increasing likelihood that an *i* will be added to one's national name. Just ask an Iraqi, Afghani or Israeli. (Israelites, on the other hand, are biblical folk.)

What is really fascinating about such resident names, however, is that they sometimes take generations to create. A few still cause sleepless nights among people who insist that *everything* must have its own proper name.

Putting aside the dastardly bastardization of Baltimoreans into Baltimorons, we should consider the long-burning question of what one calls people from Connecticut. After researching this topic in depth, Professor Allen Walker Read of Columbia University found an impressive list of early attempts at naming a resident of the Nutmeg State: Connecticutensian, Connecticutter, Connecticutian, Connecticutite, and—from Cotton Mather in 1702—Connecticotian. In addition to these serious suggestions Read found six jocular alternatives: Quonaughticotter, Connecticutey, Conneticanuck and Connectikook (one of Read's coinages), not to mention Connectecotton and even Connecticutist. A fellow writer (and a New Yorker) recently suggested to me that Connecticutlet has a nice ring to it, and one can always side with Mark Twain who adroitly sidestepped the problem by calling a character from the state a "Connecticut Yankee."

Although the issue is still unresolved, Read also took another tack by concluding that the most popular solution to the Connecticut quandary was Nutmegger. By the same token there are those who perennially avoid the tongue-twisting Massachusettsite by referring to Governor Michael Dukakis' constituents as Bay Staters.

Then there is the case of Michigan, where the issue has been resolved politically. In 1979 the state legislature voted to make Michiganian the official name. The bill was introduced at the behest of newspaper editors who were confused by a variety of names including Michigander, Michiganite and Michiganer. Some citizens, however, continue to call themselves Michiganders, a term which, legend has it, was created by Abraham Lincoln during the 1848 Presidential campaign. Michiganite is given in several reference books that don't happen to be published in Michigan.

With full realization that these questions are not among the great issues of our time, I am building a collection of resident names. Since such a collection has no commonly accepted name either, until something better comes along I have labeled my file "Domunyms" (*domus* for home, *nym* for name).

Finding domunyms has become something of a minor obsession. I once actually got hold of a Kentucky newspaper for the sole purpose of making sure the local preference was for Louisvillians over Louisvillans. Of late I have taken to writing friends and associates around the country to find out what they call themselves. The best answer to date came from South Dakotan Bill McKean: "People from Sioux Falls are called PEOPLE FROM SIOUX FALLS. There *are* limits."

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